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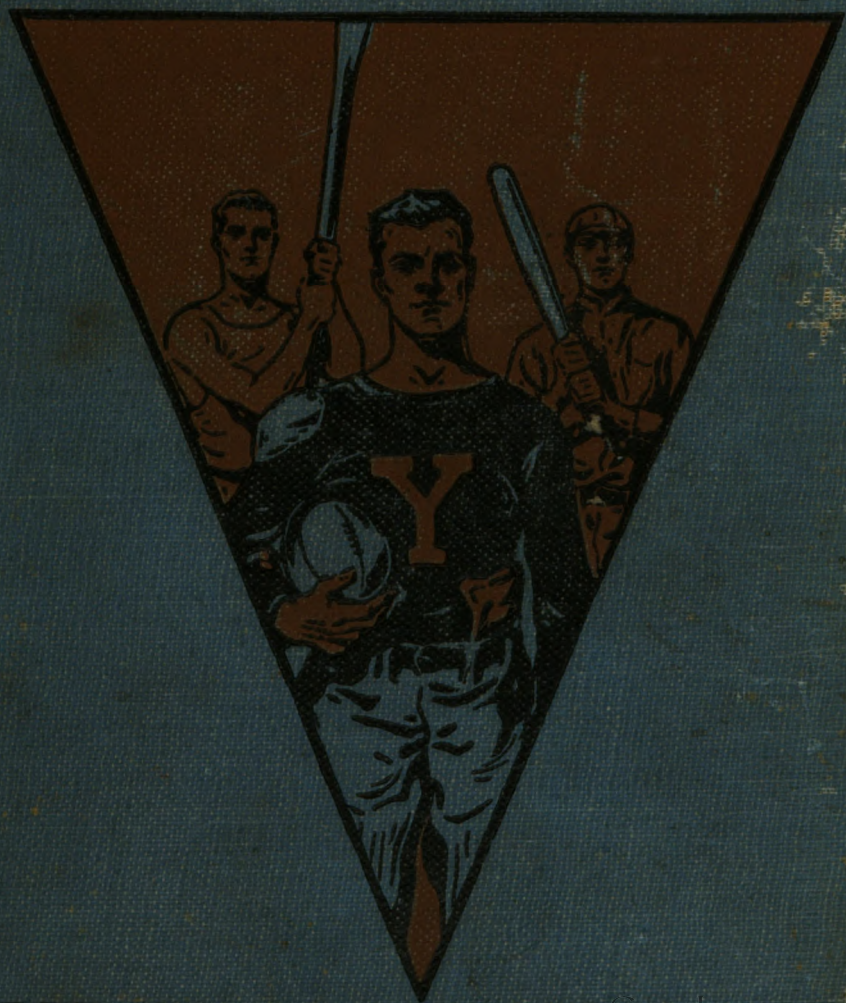
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The Call of the Varsity

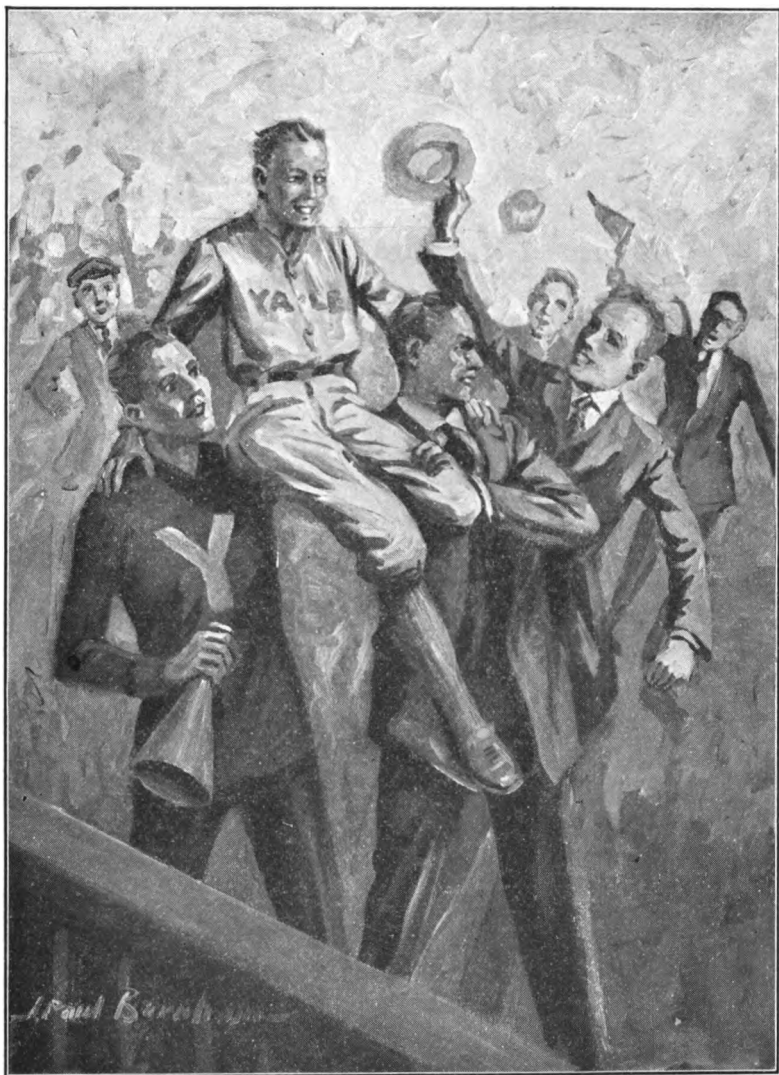


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15



They caught him up, cheering madly.

Frontispiece

THE CALL OF THE VARSITY

BY

GILBERT PATTEN

Author of "Boltwood of Yale," "The College Rebel,"
"On College Battlefields," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY

J. P. BURNHAM

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BOLTWOOD OF YALE

THE COLLEGE REBEL

ON COLLEGE BATTLEFIELDS

THE CALL OF THE VARSITY

(Other volumes in preparation)

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THE CALL OF THE VARSITY.

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THE CALL OF THE VARSITY

CHAPTER I

IN A PINCH

BOLTWOOD pitched again, putting everything he had on the ball. Slash Jennings, holding the clean-up position, was Amherst's most dangerous batter. Moreover, although he was a slugger to make any pitcher wary in a pinch, he was likewise a good waiter. This he had once more demonstrated by refusing to bite at the Yale twirler's two teasing curves, intended to lure him into reaching, after the first ball, put over high and close, had been fouled. The mound man who pitched himself into a hole with Jennings at bat usually met with disaster.

Already the hole was deep enough, although very little of it was of Boltwood's own digging. To be sure, Gray had led off with a safety, but in his eagerness to make a double play, Furbush, covering third, had fumbled Packford's grounder, and then, realizing that he could not get the runner at second, had thrown wide to first, pulling

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Rollins off the cushion. Both men were safe, and the Amherst crowd, feeling hope spring into life at last, woke up and cheered wildly. They hoped and prayed for a break.

Worse was to follow. Brisbane misjudged Schwab's easy fly to center. Having underrun it, he danced back on his heels at the last moment, and went down when the ball struck his hands. Before he could get on his feet, recover the sphere, and shoot it back into the diamond, the runners, who had held up on the paths, ready to dive back to the sacks they had abandoned, romped on for a base apiece, with the hitter already safely on first.

In this manner, with only one down, the Yale twirler was forced to face a most unpleasant situation. 'True, it was the first of the seventh inning, and Yale was leading by a score of six to nothing. But thus far in the season, with a single exception, Jennings had made a home run in every game Amherst had played; and on the occasion of that exception he had pounded out a three-bagger. Furthermore, he was the sort of a man who did these things when they counted. He was not inclined, like many heavy hitters, to bat hard when nothing depended, and fall down in the pinches. And when they saw him advancing to the plate

the now wildly excited Amherst crowd entreated him to clean the cushions.

For the greater part of the preceding six innings Boltwood had put as little strain as possible on his arm, depending to a large extent upon the support he received. Twice he had felt it necessary to speed up and hand out the stuff, and each time his lame wing had felt the strain.

It had been a foolish thing for him to pitch his arm off on that cold, raw day, when Yale played their annual game with the New York Giants; but it was not easy to remember when a Yale pitcher had been able to hold McGraw's men to a tie for six innings, and a pardonable pride in his performance had spurred Roger to remain on the mound to the finish, although the professionals took a three-run lead in the seventh.

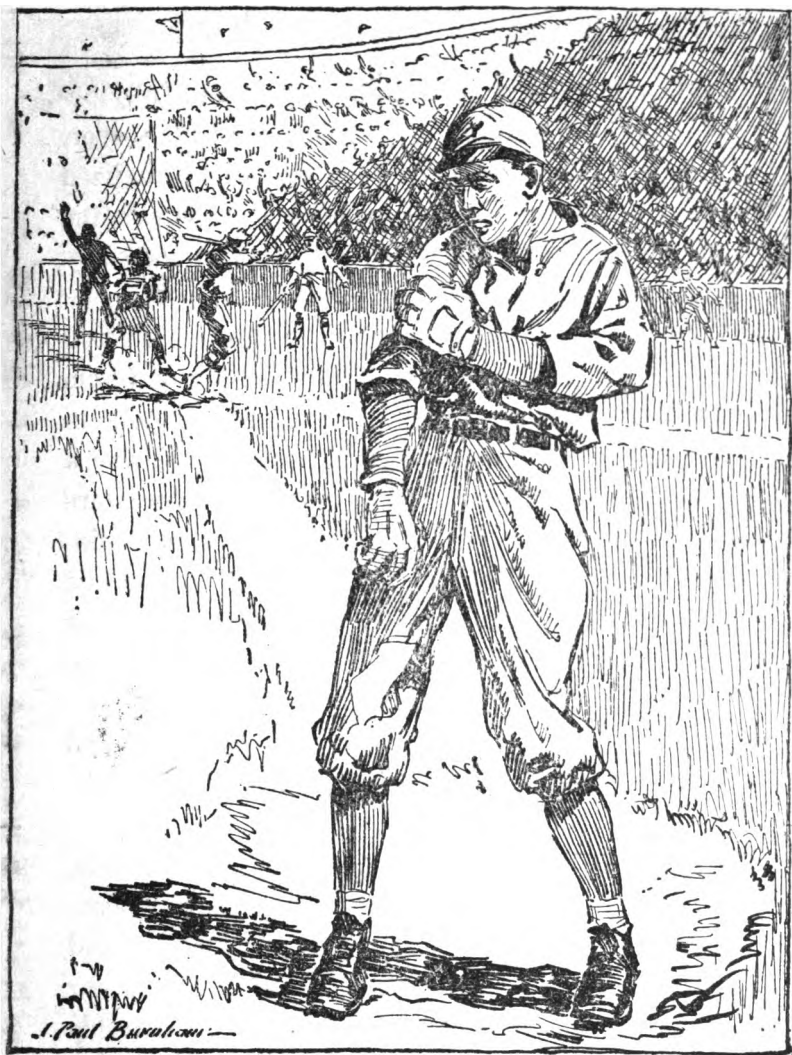
Not until after he had gone to bed that night did he realize what he had done to his arm. Although it had been massaged and tenderly cared for, it kept him wide awake most of the night with a dull, throbbing pain near the shoulder. The next day it was so lame and weak that he could scarcely lift his hand to his mouth. In the time that had elapsed since that unfortunate game everything possible had been done in the way of treating the Yale pitcher's arm, and when he en-

tered this game against Amherst he had fully believed it cured and in as good shape as ever. Nevertheless, it was not long before he realized that it would not do to overstrain, although the twinges of lameness, which returned in the early innings, seems to wear off later.

Yale was decidedly anxious to down Amherst. The pitching of Regan and Pascal, both of whom had worked in nearly every game since the one in New York, had been far from satisfactory, and a decisive victory by Williams had led the dopesters to predict sad things for the Elis upon the diamond. Somehow the fact about Roger's arm had leaked, and the newspaper writers were saying • that, without him, Yale had little chance of winning any of the big games this year.

So with Regan in no condition to pitch, and Pascal needed for Syracuse on Saturday, Boltwood went against Amherst.

"Take it easy when you can, Rog," urged Stote, the catcher, who was also captain of the team. "If you say so, I'll have Regan warmed up and ready to go in in the seventh, though I'd rather not pitch him a lick to-day. You know he needs four or five days between games in order to do his best, and he'll have to go some to hold down that Syracuse bunch."



Like a dagger's stab a pain shot from Boltwood's
shoulder to his elbow

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In Roger's mind, although he did not give a hint of his thoughts, there was a doubt concerning Regan's ability to hold down Syracuse. Regan was a hard worker, but Boltwood was not the only one who held a secret belief that he had never been intended by nature for a baseball pitcher. Nevertheless, the amazing dearth of pitching material had given the man a chance he scarcely could have obtained under other circumstances. Not in years had Yale found herself so hard up for twirlers. Of course, there were candidates galore, but even the best of the numerous would-be's were so far below Regan's class that coach and trainer, working daily to develop one or more among them, had but faint hopes of success.

Boyd Pascal could pitch—at times; yet he had serious faults. He was not much disposed to "work his head," and when hit hard he lost heart. As long as he could keep the bases clear with his fast ball, he was almost certain to go along like a real pitcher, but the moment a runner got on first, Pascal's faults began to show up glaringly. He was almost certain to lose control, and somehow after that when he did get the ball over, it was frequently hit hard.

As this state of affairs impressed itself upon

coach, trainer, and captain, all became more and more convinced of the importance of getting Boltwood back into condition. Had he not been greatly needed on the nine, it is doubtful if Roger would have played baseball at all in his junior year. He had made his reputation on the grid-iron, and to him had come the honor of being elected captain for the ensuing year. He was not a man with a thirst to hog all the honors. He was, however, ready to give all that was within him for the glory of his Alma Mater, and, having worked along gently in the cage through the winter, he came out with the other old players, and took the Southern trip with the team.

For six innings it had looked to the spectators as if Boltwood was getting away easily with the Amherst game. Even Stote had not realized that it had cost the pitcher much of a strain, and once, after Roger finished an inning with a double strike-out, he had said laughingly:

"The old soupbone's back in first-class shape, isn't she? I knew she'd come round in time."

Boltwood had smiled. He had not mentioned the fact that his arm had given him one or two warning twinges. Then rose the critical situation in the seventh.

Even should Jennings make one of his regular

homers, Yale would still have a lead of two tallies. But, somehow, Roger felt that Yale was due to need every inch of the lead that could be held. Moreover, he did not like the thought of a home run or even a long safe hit coming at this juncture. It would look as if Jennings had his measure. Whatever might be said to his face, behind his back some would say that this heavy hitter of Amherst had shown that a real batter could do things to Roger. Therefore, with one strike and two balls called, having resolved to put the sphere over in order to keep from going any deeper into the hole, Boltwood stuck everything he had on the ball, and handed up a fast one across the batter's shoulders.

As he did so, he felt—and distinctly heard—a snap in his shoulder.

CHAPTER II

THE CONQUERING MIND

LIKE a dagger's stab a pain shot from Boltwood's shoulder to his elbow, causing him involuntarily to grasp his dangling arm with his left hand. It was so poignant, so horribly acute, that it robbed him of strength, and made him dizzy and sick for a fleeting instant. A hazy mist passed before his eyes, like a puff of smoke, blotting out batter, catcher, and the stands, from which burst a sudden roar of human voices. Instinctively he knew what that roar meant. Jennings had swung at that smoker—and missed.

Almost at the same instant the Yale pitcher realized that his face must be distorted by pain, and that his movement in gripping his arm and clinging to it was sure to be read and understood by astute eyes. They would know he had hurt his arm when he put the steam into that pitch.

And so, even before the blinding mist cleared, and while he was still dizzy and faint, he stooped suddenly, scraping the gloved fingers of his left hand along the ground to gather up a bit of loose

earth, which he felt rather than saw. By doing this he was able to conceal his face for a moment or two, and when he straightened up he was smiling.

The mist dissolved. As it passed he saw Jennings again planting himself for business, his heavy bat ready, his grim face grimmer, and more resolute. Here was a hitter who became more dangerous and determined with every failure to connect; the sort of a man who never quit; the kind to make any pitcher go to the extreme limit of his skill and then meet disaster if he faltered or let up a hair.

Stote, catching himself just in time as Roger made that stooping movement, had refrained from returning the ball quickly. On his face there was just the faintest flash of a queer, inquiring look, which seemed to denote that he fancied he had detected something wrong in the pitcher's manner and expression. Instead of throwing now, he stepped forward across the plate, motioning for Boltwood to meet him. As Roger walked in he was given a rousing cheer by Yale. They did not suspect the truth.

"What is it, Bolt?" asked Stote, under cover of that burst of sound. "Anything wrong?"

Smiling broadly, in order that those who

watched him might not guess the truth, Roger answered:

"My wing came near breaking square off at the shoulder; that's all. I don't know whether I can lob the next ball up to the plate or not, but if we stop them here you'd better send Regan out to warm up the instant the inning is over. If you start him now they'll suspect the truth, and if they suspect they'll hit me."

Stote nodded beamingly, as if Boltwood had told him something very agreeable, and handed the ball over, Roger accepting it with his left hand, turned to walk back to the mound. He took his time about this, glancing toward third, where Gray was dancing off the sack tauntingly. On either hand the Amherst coaches were barking away in a manner expressive of the utmost confidence. On the right one cried:

"On your toes! It takes only one to hit! Slash will do it!"

From the left came the cry of the other:

"Get a lead, everybody! Boltwood's cracked! He's gone! Here's where we turn the trick!"

Deep down in his heart Roger Boltwood feared this might be true, but now no one could have dreamed as much from the expression of his face. The pain was still there, shooting down from his

shoulder, and he had good reason to fear that he would not find enough strength remaining in his arm to enable him to throw the ball from the slab to the pan. But he was going to try. It was necessary that he should try; neither Regan nor Pascal could step out there cold and stop Amherst.

When he faced round, Roger saw Stote puttering with the elastic strap of his mask. He knew there was no real need of this; the catcher was giving him little more time to recover. Stote did this in a foxy way, going the limit before he squatted on his haunches and signaled.

Then Roger took the ball in his fingers. Strong, well formed, prehensile fingers they were, but now they seemed to grasp the sphere numbly and weakly. With no more grip than that, it was possible that the ball would slip from his grasp with the first attempt to swing his arm. Sudden, deep, strong anger at his own helplessness rose within him.

"I'm going to put it across if it kills me in my tracks," he thought, his teeth coming together with a click that brought the muscles leaping out hard over his jaw.

He toed the slab, clasping his gloved left hand over the ball, and it was the strength of his left more than his right which enabled him to lift it

with the usual preparatory movement. Then just as the swing began his teeth locked. Every atom of tremendous determination forced that aching and rebellious arm to do its work. No one, with the possible exception of Stote, could have imagined from his movements that the ball would not leave his fingers with the same burning speed that had sent it leaping forth the last time.

Like a lump of mud it came sailing slowly through the air, its seams and stitches showing. Nevertheless, enough force had been put into the pitch to carry it squarely over the center of the plate. Unless Jennings hit it it would surely pass for a strike. And Jennings, expecting speed, started his swing too soon. Somehow he managed to hold back a little, and the ball struck the upper side of his bat.

It was a little pop fly that sailed straight into Boltwood's gloved left hand.

Gray, dashing down from third, plowed his heels into the ground, stopped, and turned to dig back. At the same time the Yale pitcher swung deliberately toward third, to which he threw—with his left hand. It was a good throw to the sack, which Furbush was leaping to cover—a good throw as far as distance and accuracy were concerned, although it seemed a distressingly long

time before the ball reached Furbush's eagerly outstretched hands. It arrived soon enough, however, and the baseman jammed it against Gray, who was making an attempt to slide under.

Through this double play, Amherst had been stopped when her prospects seemed the brightest.

CHAPTER III

THE WATCHERS

THE Yale crowd hailed him again with a cheer, as he walked toward the bench. They did not suspect; to them that last slow ball, delivered with a swing which seemed to presage speed, had been the trick of a clever mound man, using his wits against a formidable batter, and fooling him to his undoing. Roger continued to smile until seated on the bench; the moment his face could no longer be seen and read by the multitude, he relaxed, although he still kept his left hand away from that aching arm and shoulder. Some one threw his blanket coat around him. It was Stote, who sat down at his side.

"You've hurt your wing, Rog," said the captain, in a low tone. "Bad?"

"So bad I came near keeling over in my tracks."

"I knew something had happened. You don't think you can finish her out?"

"Not with any prospect of holding them down. You saw everything I had left when I pitched that last ball. Have you sent Regan out to warm up?"

"I will now. Hated to do it, unless it was absolutely necessary."

But when the Yale captain looked for Regan he was amazed to discover that the man had left the bench, was not on the coaching lines, and was not to be seen anywhere. Hasty inquiry brought the information that the missing pitcher had been observed going off toward the locker house just after the beginning of the seventh inning.

"He acted like a man with a grouch," said Hod Riddle. "You know he thought he ought to have a chance in this game, and when Bolt went in for the seventh I reckon Dan figured it that he wouldn't be needed. The game seemed to be settled, you know."

Stote was angry, and he sent a substitute chasing posthaste to find Regan.

"Tell him to get back here as fast as his legs will let him, and start warming up," instructed the captain.

Just then Carver, the first man up, led off with a hit, and it became Stote's duty to take his turn at bat. This, doubtless, was the cause of his failure to send Pascal out to limber up, in order that the necessity of having some one prepared to take Boltwood's place should be met. Batting into a quick doubleplay on the hit-and-run, Stote's

mind was still further distracted. A few minutes later Furbush slammed the first pitched ball to the infield, and perished before he could reach the initial sack. The last half of the inning was over, but a substitute pitcher had not even started to warm up.

Among the few persons in the stands who suspected the truth, it is probable that Andy Dowling was the only one who absolutely knew. He was Boltwood's roommate. In him Roger had confided, and, for all of the Yale pitcher's confidence that his arm had "come back," Andy had felt from the beginning that it might prove disastrous for Boltwood so soon to pitch another full nine-inning game. Even while things were going along so smoothly during the six innings that Roger had cut down the opposing batters, and held Amherst scoreless, Andy had not entirely ceased to worry. He had realized in that troublous seventh that poor support had put his roommate into the hole, and he likewise felt that to get out, Roger would be compelled to exert himself to the limit. Breathless with suspense, Dowling saw his friend hand up that fatal speed-ball to Jennings.

When Jennings missed, and the crowd roared, no sound escaped Andy's lips. Still holding his breath, he sat rigid, his eyes on Boltwood. He

saw the contortion of pain which passed across Roger's face; he saw Roger grab his shoulder with his gloved hand. He saw him stoop a moment later, scrape his fingers along the ground, and rise, smiling.

But Andy knew. "Good heavens!" he muttered.

At his side, Doris Keating turned upon him, laughing, elated, excited.

"What speed, Andy—what speed!" she cried. "Roger will strike him out."

Dowling seemed deaf. He had filled his lungs with a long breath, but still he sat staring at Roger, staring, staring. Gradually a look of admiration crept into his eyes, but relief and confidence did not return to his heart.

"Wake up, Andy," urged the girl, giving him a nudge. "They're cheering. You're not cheering."

"I told him he ought not to try to pitch the whole of this game," said Andy regretfully. "Now he's gone and done it. If they'd put another pitcher in to start this inning it wouldn't have happened."

"What are you talking about?" she asked, a bit annoyed. "What makes you mumble to yourself? What makes you look like that? They're

not going to score. Roger will strike this man out."

Her father, sitting at her left, was no less confident.

"Sure he'll fan him," agreed Cyrus Keating. "With the team making errors he can't depend on his support now. He's got to show his nerve, and the man who won the Traymore Cup for me, then turned around and beat the Keating car with a Comet at Indianapolis, has got the nerve. He'll come through all right, for he always does. You watch him."

Dowling was watching Roger talking with Stote in front of the pan. So clever was their action, so cheerful the manner of both pitcher and catcher, that Andy was almost deceived himself.

"But it's a bluff," he thought—"a good one, but a bluff just the same. What's the winning of this game compared with the ruining of a pitcher's arm—and the big games to follow? Stote's crazy. He shouldn't have allowed it. He'll have to warm up a relief pitcher now."

To Andy's surprise, instead of sending out a man to warm up, Stote fumbled a while with his mask, which he presently adjusted. After which he crouched and signaled.

"All right," Dowling growled, "let him wallop

his wing off, and then Yale can finish the season without a real pitcher."

Like hundreds of others, he caught his breath in a gasp as that slow ball left Boltwood's fingers and came sailing up to the plate. It seemed the kind of a ball that Jennings could hammer into the farthestmost section of the stands. But Jennings had been fooled, and in trying to retard his swing he popped the little fly into the pitcher's glove, and the double play followed, setting the Yale undergraduates into a joyous uproar.

"That's better than a strike-out," shouted Cyrus Keating, laughing.

Doris looked at Andy again. Still he was not cheering. His face expressed untold relief and satisfaction, it was true, but like one in a trance, he watched Boltwood and Stote walking to the bench. When they sat down, however, he could no longer see their faces.

"Yes, it was better than a strike-out," he agreed, showing he had not missed Mr. Keating's exclamation. "But why doesn't Stote warm up another pitcher?"

"There are only two innings more," said Doris. "Why should another pitcher go in? Roger's doing grandly. Did you ever see anything better than the way he got out of that fix?"

"Never," answered Andy promptly. "Nor luckier."

Her annoyance increased. "Lucky? Why, it was skill—and brains—that did it. Had Roger pitched another swift one, Jennings might have hit it. The slow ball fooled him. I can't understand you, Andy. You act as if you were sorry—"

"I'm sorry about something. Roger's pitched a wonderful game, Doris. I should hate to see him lose it now."

"Lose it?" She flushed indignantly. "He won't; he can't. On my word, I feel like shaking you."

"Don't shake me," he pleaded laughingly. "If there's anything in the world I object to it's to have a girl shake me. You might shake Roger, though."

"That's scarcely subtle. I wouldn't class it as generous, either. He has been a loyal friend to me."

"He's loyal all right; you can bank on that." In a low tone he added: "You think a great deal of Bolt, Doris?"

"Indeed I do," she answered frankly. "How could I help it?"

"You can't help it," was his nervous response. "Envy is an ignoble emotion; but we can always

control it. Why doesn't Stote send out a man to warm up?"

He was not the only person who was wondering why the Yale captain neglected to do this. In a distant part of the stand sat four juniors, classmates of Boltwood, who had followed the work of the Yale slabman with considerable interest, which, however, with at least three of them, was strangely lacking in sympathy. Malcolm Douglass sat between his roommate, Fred Morrison, and his friend, Claude Fenwick. Beyond Fenwick, in the same row, was Newton Baxby, a man of some prominence in college, whose society Fenwick constantly courted. Fenwick, unusually handsome, though slightly dissipated in appearance, was a thorough bounder, and it was by clinging to Baxby's skirts that he had received the lift which landed him in the fold of Zeta Psi. And, though he whispered it to no one, there burned in his heart more than a spark of hope that through Baxby he might yet be gathered to the mystic shades of Bones.

Douglass had known Fenwick before coming to college, but Fenwick had reached Yale through Philips Andover, while Malcolm prepared at a smaller school. And, though their friendship continued at Yale, these preparatory channels had

cast them into different grooves. If Malcolm had ever dreamed of rooming with Fenwick he learned that the latter had friends and associates whom he preferred, and a roommate who had chummed with him at Andover.

Throughout the earlier innings, Douglass had sneered persistently and without justice at the work of Boltwood.

"It's his luck to get away with it, whether he's got the goods or not," he declared. "There never was a luckier duck than he. Baseball or football, it makes no difference which, he gets by, and makes the team. Then, to think they should elect him captain of the eleven, for next season!"

Fenwick laughed. "You certainly love that man, don't you? What's he ever done to you?"

"Oh, nothing much. I didn't want him for a roommate, anyhow, but we were thrown together last fall. I was glad when he wanted to arrange it to hitch up with Dowling. It gave me Morry, and I'd rather have him than Boltwood by at least a hundred per cent."

"Thanks for the taffy," chuckled Morrison, a round-faced, jolly-looking chap. "You're not under oath."

Douglass lied, and Morrison knew it. The fact that Roger had preferred Dowling to Malcolm

left a rankling wound that did not heal. But there were other reasons.

"I suppose I ought to love him," sneered Douglass. "Only for him I might have made the eleven. He was so cocky and had such a know-it-all way that he made me tired. I played both football and baseball before I came to Yale, and when he attempted to coach me wrong at the former game, it was natural for me to kick."

"And you kicked yourself clean off the team, Dug," put in Fenwick. "It wasn't good policy."

"Policy be hanged? I couldn't kotow to Boltwood."

"But I don't see," continued Fenwick, "why you were so set on playing football and displayed no apparent effort to make the nine. You used to pitch, and I had a notion you were better fitted for that than for football."

"Perhaps I was. But there's another thing: At the very beginning I had to run up against that man. We both had a chance to pitch for our class against the sophs in the freshman year. I tried for it; he got there. How? Money. Why, everybody remembers what he was as a freshman—a high roller, a hot sport, a spender. He bought anything he wanted."

"He never bought his way into a junior

society," reminded Baxby, who had a dull, heavy face and a rather stolid manner.

Fenwick laughed again. "On the contrary," he said, "he tried kicking, and found it disastrous. He was in that big holler against the society system, and the societies passed him by. It taught him a lesson, I reckon, for I've noticed that he's pulled in his horns and changed completely this year."

"Oh, he's probably dreaming of senior-society glory," said Douglass.

"And he's got just about as much chance as a dewdrop would have of becoming a lake in the Desert of Sahara. Oh, yes, I know he's popular with a certain set, but it isn't the right set. Even being chosen football captain won't land him, though some may think it will. Other big football men have passed through tap day without being tapped, and if I'm any prophet, there's no tap coming to Mr. Boltwood."

"I don't think any of us are in a position to prophesy," said Morrison.

Fenwick leaned forward to give the speaker a glance. He did not like Morrison, and he had told Douglass as much privately.

"How do you know so much?" he inquired, shrugging his shoulders.

"Oh, I can guess, and that's all any of us can do," was the cheerful retort.

At this point the first fluke of the seventh inning took place, and henceforth the attention of the quartet was fixed still more closely upon the game. When the bases were filled, with only one down, Douglass found it difficult to repress a show of satisfaction.

"He's gone," he muttered for Fenwick's ear. "They've got him on the run. His arm is failing."

"I'm not sure of that. It's errors that have pushed him against the wall."

"But he's got a lame arm. He's been babying it all through the game. He can't do that now."

Barely had Douglass uttered these words when Boltwood pulled Jennings for the second strike, and at the same time showed a flashing sign of distress. Douglass caught that sign.

"He's gone," he insisted.

"I don't see how you figure that," said Baxby. "Look at him talking to Stote, and laughing. They're putting up a job on Jennings."

"And you watch Jennings clean the sacks," persisted Douglass. "If I'm not badly mistaken, he'll do it."

He was mistaken, greatly to his chagrin.

CHAPTER IV

NO SHUT-OUT

WHEN Furbush was thrown out at first, Stote suddenly remembered that he had not sent out a substitute pitcher to limber up. Unless Boltwood could return to the mound it would be necessary to send in a man who was absolutely cold, a very unwise thing to do when it could be avoided. The Yale captain cast a hurried glance toward the locker building, as he turned and jogged in the direction of the bench. Regan was not to be seen; the substitute player who had been sent to look for him was returning, alone. Swerving suddenly, Stote made for this player.

"Where is he?" he snapped in a low tone as he drew near. "What's the matter? Didn't you find him?"

"Not a trace of him," was the answer. "He's gone—I don't know where."

Muttering a dismayed exclamation, Stote spun round and strode toward Boltwood, who had risen from the bench, as if to return to the diamond,

but was indulging in a drink of water, like one upon whom the knowledge that he was extremely thirsty had dawned suddenly. In a moment, the Yale captain was at his elbow.

"Regan's missing," said Stote in a low tone. "I should have sent Pascal out, I suppose, but I didn't. Can't you go in and hold them a little longer? I'll have Pascal working in a jiffy."

"I can go in," returned Roger; "but I won't guarantee to hold them. You know I'll do my best."

"All right. I don't see any other way we can fix it. Work as easy as you can, and take all the time possible."

Then he ordered Pascal out to warm up, but time was pressing.

The Amherst players were quick to observe Pascal's movements and form a deduction. Frank Maroney, first baseman and captain of the team, called attention to the relief pitcher jogging hurriedly out in company with the change catcher.

"First of the eighth, and look at that," he said. "They're sending a man to warm up. It wasn't simply errors which let us people the corners last inning; Boltwood's weakening, or I'm a miserable guesser. His wing is beginning to play out. We ought to get to him and pound in some runs before

they can shove Pascal against us. You're up, Loudon. Take his measure."

Loudon, Amherst's pitcher, was almost as dangerous as Jennings as a hitter. Nodding in reply to Maroney's instruction, he trotted to the pan, and was waiting even before Boltwood reached the slab.

Roger did not start the inning by a few throws to loosen his arm; he did not dare put it to the test of unnecessary effort. As he faced Stote, who crouched and made a bluff at signaling, he heard his teammates begin to bark behind him with even more vigor than usual. Aware that a situation tinged with danger had arisen, they were coaching with a show of confidence intended to impress their antagonists. If one judged by their words, they expected Roger to mow the Amherst hitters down in rotation and end the game in a hurry.

"Only six more, old man." Jack Inman kept roaring from second. "Take 'em as they come. They're all easy for you to-day."

But Packford, on the coaching line, was making talk of an entirely different nature.

"The crisis in China!" he cried. "Another crockery arm gone to smash! Bolt would if he could, but he can't. Pretty bad, pretty bad!

Never mind, there's something good coming. They're all easy, Loud, old man; you can knock the cover off any of 'em."

There was absolutely nothing but the cover on the ball when Roger, setting his teeth, managed to heave it across the plate. It came over fair, and, in his eagerness, Loudon lifted an amazingly high fly, which was presently caught by Inman. Stote made a great show of extreme amusement.

"Fooled him beautifully, Bolt," he laughed. "You'll get them all just like that."

Sincerely Roger wished he could. One pitched ball had disposed of Loudon, but even that had cost him pain and effort which brought the perspiration out on his face in beads.

Maroney himself was the next batter.

"Oh, put a little steam behind 'em, Boltwood," he urged as he stepped into the batters' box. "Where's all your smoke gone to?"

"I don't have to use it on you, old man," was the airy retort. "I'm saving it for the good batters. I don't think you've got a hit to-day." This was true, and Maroney flushed at the recollection of previous strike-outs. "As long as your batting average looks so sickly," added Roger, "I'll give you one that's about your measure. Here, hit this."

Using his left hand, he actually tossed the ball to the Amherst captain. Maroney, yearning for speed, hit a punk grounder into the diamond and was easily thrown out before he was anywhere near first base.

It was not at all remarkable that the Yale crowd, recovering from the surprise which Roger's action had given them, should cheer even more lustily than ever. It was almost too quickly and easily done, and too good to be true. If there was anything the matter with Boltwood, anything which had caused Stote to start Pascal limbering his arm, it now seemed that the Yale pitcher was destined to get through the inning without much trouble, and with scarcely any effort. Lucky it certainly seemed to be, but there were those who insisted on branding it cleverness on the part of Boltwood.

Deeply disgusted because of his own failure, Maroney hurried back toward the plate and grabbed Hollis, who followed him, by the shoulders.

"You can hit a slow ball, Holly," he hissed in the Amherst catcher's ear. "That's all he's got now. His speed is gone, and he's working a bluff. Make him get a good one over, and then drive it a mile."

"All right," said Hollis. "If he does get a good slow ball across, just watch me."

Now Roger was one of those pitchers with brains and an excellent memory. As Hollis faced him he recalled that in the second inning this same man had nearly given him heart failure by slashing out one of his slow ones for three sacks. Since then he had fed the man speed, and Hollis had not even fouled the ball. Speed was the only thing to stop him.

"But I haven't any speed to give him now," thought Roger apprehensively. "I must try to lead him into reaching."

In trying to do this he pitched Hollis four wide ones, giving the man a pass.

Casper, who came next, hit the second ball for a safety to right field, enabling Hollis to romp all the way to third. A moment later Casper stole second, and, even though two men were out, the Amherst coaches seemed confident that runs would be made.

Knowing it was necessary to trust to luck and his backing, Roger threw a slow one over for Marlow. The batter hit it. It was a skipping grounder, which Hippy Carver, the shortstop, should have scooped and wafted to first for the third put-out. For some reason, Hippy fumbled.

Then, realizing the necessity of haste, he threw ten feet over Buck Rollins' head.

Hollis scored easily, and the coacher took a chance, sending Casper in. The right fielder got the ball and threw to the pan, but Casper slid safely.

Carver displayed the deepest humiliation and chagrin. "Oh, that was awful, Bolt," he said. "I should have had him by fifteen or twenty feet. I'm to blame. They'd never scored at all only for me."

"Never mind," said Roger. "We've got a good lead yet. We must get the next man."

The next man was Gray, who had started the trouble in the previous inning. Leading the Amherst list, he was a hard man to pitch to, always forcing a twirler to go the limit. A good single hitter and a fast base runner, he held Amherst's record of the previous season for the number of scores made by any individual player.

"I'm afraid," said Gray politely, as he faced Roger, "that we've got you going, old man. Hadn't you better retire before anything really serious happens to you?"

Roger's only reply was a quiet smile. As carefully as possible he pitched the first ball over the plate, and a strike was called, Gray declining to

swing. The next one was wide, but it was followed by another across the corner, and two strikes had been declared without Gray moving his bat from his shoulder.

"If you can't see my speed," said Roger, with pretended consideration, "I'll let up a little."

"Just put one more over, and I'll take a squint at it," returned Gray.

Behind Roger's back Marlow had been creeping off second, while these courtesies were being exchanged, and now Boltwood turned unexpectedly and shot the sphere to the sack. Marlow, lunging back, was tagged out.

CHAPTER V

FROWNING FAILURE

TILLED with regret and shouldering all the blame for those two runs, Carver walked in at Roger's side.

"You'd have had the credit of a shut-out, sure," he insisted. "They weren't really doing anything to the slow ones you were tossing 'em."

Stote met Boltwood in front of the bench.

"Considering everything," he said, "we pulled out pretty well. It was laughable to see them swing their heads off at the slow ones. The shift from speed to that kind pitching had the most of them going. Really, I believe they'd eat Pascal's smoke, for he can put only a little dinky break on his swift one. How's the arm feel?"

"No worse, though there's not much of anything left in it."

"Only three more men to get," said the Yale captain, looking at him sharply, "and I believe you could get them. It would be something worth while to finish out the game now. There wouldn't be so much newspaper talk about your lame wing

driving you to the bench. We're liable to make more runs, too. The head of the list is up now."

Buster Coy had found his favorite club, and was walking out to the plate. The band was playing the refrain of "Boola," and the undergraduates were singing it in a manner which denoted the utmost confidence and a cheerful disregard for Amherst's two tallies. Stote took his place on the coaching line.

Coy cracked a grounder to the right of Packford, the Amherst shortstop. Packford made a sensational stab with his bare hand, and followed it with a throw to first, shot across the diamond without trying to stop or set himself for the effort. Maroney, stretching himself at full length on the ground, picked the ball out of the turf when it seemed sure to fall short, and Coy was out in his last jump for the sack.

"Too bad," muttered Roger to himself. "If we could only get one or two more runs now, I believe I'd chance it to go back and finish up."

Always it had been greatly to his distaste to give over any job seriously undertaken. There was in him no atom of the quitter. Nevertheless, he was not, like many determined men, pig-headed to the exclusion of judgment and reason. Convinced that he had chosen the right course, he

would pursue it unswervingly; he never vacillated, but he was sometimes extremely deliberate in making up his mind. The entire latter half of that eighth inning he spent in mentally debating the problem by which he was confronted. And not until Buck Rollins fanned, being the third man out, and leaving a runner on second with no further scores registered for Yale, did Roger make up his mind. With Rollins' final fruitless whiff, he suddenly decided. Casting off the sweater, he stepped out and met Stote.

"If you say so, I'll try it," he said quietly.

In the distance, Pascal, expecting a call to the mound, had ceased throwing to the change catcher, and was watching for Stote's signal.

"Good!" said the Yale captain. "I don't want you to hurt your arm any further, but—"

"I won't."

As they saw Boltwood walk on to the field again the Amherst players wondered.

"What are they trying to put over on us?" exclaimed Loudon, puzzled. "Did they send that man out to limber up just to fool us into the belief that Boltwood was all in?"

Captain Maroney was wiser. "Boltwood's going to try to go through. They'll run Pascal up against us in a hurry if we get at Boltwood. If

we can, it's up to us to get him good and plenty before they make the shift. Work him to the limit, Gray. We'll score you if you ever get on."

But Gray found that Roger's control was fairly good, even though he had lost his smoke. Forced to hit, Gray boosted the ball to center, and complained bitterly when Brisbane made a handsome running catch of the fly.

Stote grinned at Roger through the wire meshes of his mask.

"Only two more," he reminded him. "You see how easy it is. You can keep on saving your wing for the next job."

"Let me at him," said Packford fiercely. "Let's see if he can keep me from getting a safety with those dinky balls."

Packford pounded one past second, which Inman failed to reach by six inches.

"Don't worry about him," laughed Stote. "He'll pass away on the journey. He'll never register."

Schwab hit a slow, wabby grounder toward third, and again eagerness to make a double play caused an infielder to bobble the ball. While Furbush was juggling it Packford took second, and Schwab was so far down the line that Stote yelled for the third baseman not to throw, fearing a wild heave.

And now Slash Jennings was up again, a fact which filled the Amherst players and their friends with feverish hope.

"A homer, old boy," urged Maroney. "You're certainly due. Give us a homer, and we'll only need one to tie it up."

Roger felt that Jennings was the one man who could not be fooled twice with a straight, slow ball. Expecting it now, the Amherst slugger would not swing too quickly. So, taking his time, the Yale pitcher tried to pull the man with a curve. It was a slow roundhouse, of course, and the ball missed the plate by more than a foot.

"Oh, get one over, do," urged Jennings.

"Yes, put it across," bluffed Stote. "He'll pop to the infield, same as he did before."

But Roger's next one was likewise wide. One of the coaches raised the cry that Boltwood did not dare let Jennings hit.

The Yale pitcher continued to work slowly and deliberately, giving his arm time to rest between deliveries. He knew Jennings was eager to hit, and he was not surprised when the man reached across the plate and fouled one off the end of his bat.

"Don't lose your reputation to-day, Slash," pleaded Stote sardonically, as he resumed his

position, after the ball had been returned to Roger. "You know you've simply got to do something now. It's your last chance."

Jennings fouled again, the ball spinning down back of the line to first.

"That's two on him, Bolt," called the Yale captain. "And he's their fancy fence-buster!"

The involuntary cheer, which had started in the Yale stands, died down, and there was a breathless hush. There was now little doubt in the mind of any one that Roger's arm had gone wrong, and the spectators were anxiously asking one another if it were possible for him to hold Amherst in check under such conditions with the mighty Jennings wielding the hickory. Such a thing would be in the nature of a miracle.

Roger did not dare put one over close, for Jennings was the kind of a hitter who could pick 'em off his knuckles and send them sailing a mile. Therefore he continued his efforts to make the man hit.

Again Jennings reached. Again he fouled. This time, however, he hoisted the ball into the air, and Stote, lunging after it, made a catch which afterward caused some of his admiring friends to declare that he stretched his arms at least three times their regulation length.

A yell burst from the Yale crowd, followed quickly by a regular rythmical barking cheer, full of the utmost joy. In the midst of their cheering, some of them were compelled to stop and laugh as they saw Jennings turn petulantly and angrily and fling his bat spinning along the ground. Even Buck Rollins, usually dignified, was so delighted that he did a bit of turkey trotting around the Amherst man still anchored on first base.

"Here's your last victim, Bolt," called Stote, as Loudon advanced.

Amherst was desperate now. With only one down, and Jennings the hitter, the runners had played safe. With two down, both men started to steal the instant Roger made a move to pitch to Loudon. Whether or not a signal had been given for the hit-and-run, Loudon met the ball and lifted it over the shortstop's head for a dinky Texas leaguer. Riddle, the left fielder, came racing in swiftly and got the sphere on the first bound, which caused the coacher to hold Packford at third. The corners were peopled. A safe hit would pobably deliver two runs; a two-bagger would doubtless score three men.

Maroney made that two-bagger. It was a terrible drive to deep center, and, seeing there was little hope of getting Loudon at the plate, Yale

was forced to be contented to hold Maroney at second.

Now the score was six to five. Surely it was time to call Pascal to the relief. Boltwood had failed; it was foolish to think that he could stop Amherst and win the game with that pitifully slow ball.

CHAPTER VI

THE SUPREME TEST

I KNEW it," muttered Andy Dowling, pale with apprehension. "He was crazy to try it. I knew what would happen."

Doris' gloved hand was grasping his arm. She leaned forward, tense and rigid. Her face was likewise very pale.

"But he will stop them," she declared hoarsely. "Yale is still one run in the lead."

"There's something the matter with the boy," exclaimed Cyrus Keating huskily. "He isn't using speed any more. He's—"

"He hasn't got it to use," said Andy regretfully. "His arm went to the bad when he handed up that last sizzler to Jennings in the seventh inning. He's been pitching on his nerve ever since. Stote should have put some one else in long ago. He'll have to do so now, and we're only one tally to the good."

The Yale crowd seemed thunderstruck by the turn the game had taken. Recovering from the shock administered by Maroney's two-bagger, and

the scoring of three runners, they began to buzz all over the stands, questioning one another with excited, apprehensive voices. Down in front the head cheer-leader shook himself into life and caught up his huge megaphone, calling directions through it to his assistants. Then he swung round and pointed the muzzle of the megaphone toward the students, rising tier on tier above him.

"The long cheer," he called—"the long cheer for Boltwood. Ready now—everybody!"

Out on the diamond the infielders were returning to their positions, and as they did so they called back encouragement to Boltwood. On the other hand, the Amherst players, still further amazed by the persistency of the pitcher and Stote's failure to bench him, were literally agog with eagerness. To them it seemed too good to be true. The coaches were whooping; from second Maroney shouted something. Jennings rushed at Hollis, who was ready to step into the batters' box, grabbing him by the shoulders and shooting some words into his ear. Hollis nodded and grinned.

Now it happened that, knowing Hollis was the next hitter, Roger had fancied he could work him for the "out," which would decide the game in Yale's favor. If Stote had urged him to go to the

bench, Roger would have done so, but the Yale captain had left it wholly to the pitcher. Therefore, Boltwood resumed his place on the mound, and Pascal, who had been waiting to pitch, turned in disgust and threw the ball, with which he had been warming up, on the ground at his feet. Like many others, he believed that the game was being handed to Amherst on a platter.

Roger imagined he knew what Jennings had told Hollis. They meant to force him to the limit. It was their intention to compel him to put all the strain possible on his lame arm.

He held Maroney close to second, snapping the ball twice to that sack with his left hand. All the while he was doing some thinking about Hollis. The result of that thinking was a bender, pitched to curve over the inside corner. Fortunately, his control was sufficient to get across that corner, and Hollis, waiting according to instructions, heard a strike called.

"You know this man is a cinch, Bolt," called Stote, stepping forward in front of the plate before he returned the ball. "You can toss it underhand and he won't touch it."

Roger hesitated, as if he really contemplated trying that trick again, and he saw Hollis grip his bat and set himself to swing. It was an under-

handed pitch, but not a toss. Swinging his hand below his hip, Boltwood sent the ball up across Hollis' shoulders.

Hollis made a foul.

"Two strikes!" called the umpire.

Now this was something Amherst had not expected. The Yale pitcher had simply refused to do any more work than was necessary. He had taken a chance, and it was Hollis who found himself in a hole.

Again the Yale cheer rang across the field. Amherst answered promptly with a cheer for Hollis.

Turning the ball in his fingers, Boltwood stood looking at the batter, his mind still busy. He was not in a trance, however, as he showed by whirling quickly and throwing to second when given a signal by Stote. Had he been able to make that throw a fraction quicker, Maroney would have been caught. Indeed, the play was so close that the Amherst crowd gasped and breathed their relief when the umpire thrust out his hand, palm downward.

Stote gave Roger a little more time by politely questioning the decision, and there were some who continued to believe that Maroney had been put out by a whisker.

Once more there was a hush. Somehow, it seemed that every one had suddenly arrived at the belief that the next pitch would settle the game. Boltwood himself believed it. With the ball once more in his hands, he steeled his every nerve. His teeth clicked together, his nostrils dilated a little. He summoned his powers for a supreme effort. Hollis would be waiting for another slow ball. He would hit it, too; Roger felt sure of that.

Keyed to that extreme tension, the Yale man pitched. Perhaps he would never pitch again as long as he lived. To the amazement of every witness, he swung his arm with a long, free sweep, and threw every ounce of his strength into that delivery. Never had he handed up a speedier ball. It came whistling like a bullet across the batter's shoulders, and Hollis, taken wholly by surprise, struck too late. The sphere was in Stote's glove before the hitter's bat swung across the plate.

CHAPTER VII

A MATTER OF DOUBT

EXHAUSTED, Boltwood lay face downward on the slab in the dressing room, the smell of witch-hazel and arnica in his nostrils as two rubbers worked over him. Hawkins was giving attention to Roger's right arm, that long, strong, finely muscled, well-formed arm, which had lasted until the game was finished, and had won it by pitching a whistling speed ball when everybody believed it no longer held more than enough strength to throw a weak little curve across the pan.

Hawkins' fingers were working at the muscles of Roger's shoulder.

"That's the place, is it?" he asked, as he gently kneaded a particular spot.

"That's it!" answered Boltwood through his clenched teeth, the words coming forth with a hissing sound. "Oh, yes, that's it, all right!"

Hawkins slapped on more arnica and witch-hazel, and continued to work over the injured spot with the utmost skill and care.

"It's a bad place to hurt a man's arm," he remarked, in a low tone. "They say that's where Christy Mathewson hurt his shoulder the time, everybody thought he'd cooked his wing for good. You know how he had to change his style of delivery, and how he invented a new kink, the fade-away. It took him months to do it."

"If it requires months to cure my wing and get me back into shape, there'll be no more pitching for me this year," said Roger.

"It may not be as bad as that," returned Hawkins, with an attempt to be cheerful.

Boltwood had taken his shower. Other players, having indulged in showers or plunges and rubbed down, came round, partly dressed, to admire the splendid figure of the big pitcher, and make inquiries about his arm. One man, who did not belong to the team, and who was not supposed to be there, appeared at Roger's side, as the latter, his teeth set, lay with his head turned away from the man who was kneading that injured limb. He was a thin, freckled, homely, big-nosed chap, with washed-out blue eyes. In those eyes, however, there was a look of sincere sympathy and anxiety. The man's voice, rasping and unpleasant though it was, held a touch of something which indicated genuine, deep sincerity.

"The old flinger's going to be all right again, isn't it, Boltwood?" he asked.

Roger's lips twisted into a wry grin over his teeth. "Oh, I hope so, Jones," he replied.

"You won the game, old man. They didn't have to take you out. You didn't have to quit."

"Were you worrying about that?"

"I didn't have time to worry. I didn't hardly know how the game was going. Oh, no, I knew you'd win. They can't beat *you*!"

Somebody pushed him aside. "Get out of here, Jones! You're always under foot." It was Buck Rollins.

"And that's where he always will be," said Hippy Carver, as Hanson Jones retired without protest. "He's a regular nuisance. He seems to think himself a privileged character since he got the chance to handle a megaphone at the games."

"Poor old Handy Jones!" said Rollins, with a disdainful smile. "It's a wonder he didn't try again for the nine this year. He's tried for almost everything."

"It's the track team now," chuckled Hippy. "He's pacemaking the runners." Both men laughed.

"And that's the true Yale spirit," declared Roger in Jones' defense. "Without hope of per-

sonal glory, he's doing everything in his power for old Eli."

"Oh, come off!" scoffed Hippy. "He's a chump. He actually thinks he'll make some team and get his letter. You can't convince me any fellow who knew he didn't have a ghost of a show would go through what Jones has gone through."

Hawkins' fingers were sparring a soft tattoo up and down Boltwood's arm, from shoulder to elbow. He finished with a few twisting, circular rubs, and Boltwood leaped lightly up from the slab, hurrying to get into his clothes. While Roger was dressing, the trainer, the coach, and the captain of the team each had some questions to ask about his arm. To the trainer, Boltwood said:

"If I stick to the proper feed I presume I may be excused from appearing at ten-eighty-one tonight? I've an invitation to dine with some friends at the Taft."

The trainer nodded. "But don't break over. Your arm may come back yet before the big games are on."

CHAPTER VIII

A MAN SHE KNEW

DORIS and her father were waiting for Boltwood and Dowling when they arrived at the Taft. In a modest lacy evening gown, the girl looked lovelier than ever, and the eyes of both young men glowed at the sight of her. Roommates and bosom friends though they were, there was between them an honest, open rivalry for the favor of this girl. Misunderstanding and suspicion had once threatened the disruption of their friendship, but now each man felt sure that never again could anything happen that would raise a shadow of doubt in his mind. It was to be all square and aboveboard, and the one who eventually became the loser would take his medicine like a man, and congratulate the other.

She smiled on them both as they entered the hotel parlor. It was to Roger that she gave both her hands. "I knew they couldn't beat you to-day," she said. "I knew you'd never let them do it."

"Then you knew more than I did, Doris," he

laughingly confessed. "My feet were pretty cold in that last inning."

"I don't believe it! You didn't show a symptom. You went at it to strike the last man out just as if you were positive of doing so. And Andy thought your arm was gone! Why, the last ball you pitched was the fastest I ever saw."

"And I'll own up that when I pitched it I wasn't sure my arm wouldn't go with it, Doris. I simply had to give that man something he wasn't looking for. He can hit speed, but he wasn't expecting it then."

"That's always the way to fool the man you're up against," put in Cyrus Keating. "Give him what he isn't looking for. That's what we've done with the automobile builders. The new Keating-Comet will jar them some. The pinion shift is the greatest improvement since the self-starter; and we control it, which means royalties that would let us sit down and keep busy counting the money coming in if we never manufactured another car ourselves."

Cyrus Keating and Henry Boltwood, Roger's father, once rivals in business, were now partners in the concern that manufactured the Keating-Comet. The opening of new salesrooms for the concern in New Haven had afforded Mr. Keating an excuse to run up on the day of the Amherst

game, and, knowing that he meant to take that game in, his daughter had insisted on accompanying him.

Keating had reserved a table in the handsome dining room sufficiently far from the music to allow them to chat freely.

Barely were they seated, when a waiter was seen escorting three students in their direction.

"Hello!" murmured Dowling; "here come some friends of ours, Roger."

Glancing up, Boltwood looked into the eyes of Malcolm Douglass, who was passing the table accompanied by Fenwick and Baxby. Douglass gazed straight at Roger without even the flicker of an eyelash. Fenwick was saying something to Baxby, and neither he nor his friend seemed aware of the other two students as they went by. This amused Dowling mildly.

"A grouch, a bounder, and a bluffer," he said, in a low tone. "I'd like to know who writes the verse and other stuff that appears in the *Lit* and the *Record* branded with Newton Baxby's nom de plume, 'Newby.' Whenever I look at his face I can't believe it possible that he possesses the ability to perpetrate anything resembling verse or humor. Some of the stuff is clever, too."

The three students settled down at their table

in a manner which placed Douglass facing Doris Keating. And barely was he seated, when Malcolm began staring at her in a manner so marked that Roger, who chanced to notice it, felt his gorge rising.

"The insolent cad!" thought Boltwood. "I believe he smiled at her. What's he trying to do? Does he think he can pick up an open flirtation with such a girl, or is he after my goat?"

Roger was still fuming when suddenly he saw that Malcolm Douglass had risen to his feet. He knew that the man was deliberately and boldly coming forward, with the assurance of a person about to address friends. In a flash, Roger believed he understood the man's purpose. Douglass would make an excuse of speaking to Andy on some pretext, in order that he might secure an introduction to Doris Keating.

The offensive junior paused beside the table, whereupon Dowling and Boltwood both rose to their feet, Mr. Keating following their example more deliberately. Roger's teeth were set, and he felt the blood burning in his cheeks. He gave Douglass a steady look, but the other, smiling the least bit, was regarding Doris unswervingly.

"I beg your pardon," said Malcolm, bowing slightly to them all. "Don't let me disturb you,

but I couldn't resist speaking, although I'm afraid Miss Keating has forgotten me." He looked at her expectantly.

She gave a little exclamation of surprise. "Why, Mr. Douglass," she said, putting out her hand, "I didn't recognize you. Father let me introduce Mr. Douglass. I met him at Bar Harbor, in July."

"I'm very glad to meet you, Mr. Keating," said Douglass, stepping round the table and shaking the older man's hand warmly.

"Of course," said Doris, "you know Mr. Boltwood and Mr. Dowling?"

"They are classmates of mine," said Douglass, bowing again a trifle stiffly. "I hope your mother's health is improved, Miss Keating."

She assured him that it seemed to be, and, after the briefest sort of a pleasant and formal chat, he excused himself and returned to his companions.

"Queer you should know Dougless, Doris," said Andy, as he sat down again.

Boltwood felt like saying he was sorry, although, of course, he did not.

"I know his sister much better," she explained. "It was through her that I met Malcolm Douglass. Kate is a splendid girl. She was at Bar Harbor

last summer with Mrs. Herkimer—you know John Herkimer's widow, father?"

"Huh! Oh, yes! Old Herkimer left her six or seven millions. I believe she's one of your mother's girlhood friends, Doris."

"Yes, mother has known Mrs. Herkimer all her life. She's eccentric, but kind-hearted, and very generous. She'll never travel around alone, and it's her hobby to have a youthful companion. She seemed as fond of Kate Douglass as if Kate were her own daughter. I didn't wonder, when I came to know Kate. There was nothing in the slightest degree menial about the position she held with Mrs. Herkimer."

"I don't know much about Malcolm Douglass," admitted Dowling. "He's a rather good dresser, and seems to be a bit of a swell."

"It may be that he has a small income on which he's going through college," said Doris in a low tone. "His father and mother are both dead. He has an older brother, out West somewhere. I had an idea that Mrs. Herkimer might be giving him his course at Yale. I'm surprised, though, that he's not playing with the varsity."

"He did come out for the eleven, but he didn't make it."

"He's a baseball player—a pitcher. I saw him

pitch two games last summer, and he won them both. He was stopping across on the mainland, at a little place called Sorrento. Sorrento had a really excellent baseball team, made up principally of summer visitors."

"A pitcher!" exclaimed Andy. "Oh, yes, seems to me I remember something about his trying to pitch in his freshman year. It was Bolt who beat him to it then for the position of twirler in the class games."

"Perhaps that's why he has never had any use for me since," laughed Roger, flushing, and slightly embarrassed.

CHAPTER IX

DOUGLASS REFUSES

THE following afternoon, Stote found Boltwood alone in his study. There was a worried expression on the face of the varsity captain as he flung himself down in the big easy-chair. He inquired anxiously about Boltwood's arm.

"Hawkins has been working at it again to-day," said Roger. "That shoulder didn't let me sleep much last night. Between us, I'm afraid I've put it on the blink this time."

"That's fine!" Stote exclaimed bitterly. "We're in a pretty mess! Here it is the first of May, and with you knocked out we haven't a real pitcher to our name. We'll make a big splash, won't we?"

But for the seriousness of the situation, his disgust would have been amusing. Roger did not smile.

For half an hour they discussed the pitching staff, but neither could see a way out.

Three minutes after Stote's departure, Roger

suddenly struck the study table a crack with his fist.

"Great Cæsar!" he exclaimed, throwing back his head and staring, open-mouthed, at a banner on the wall. "Nobody has thought of him! He hasn't ever really tried to do anything at college baseball. Who knows but he's the very man to fill the breach! I'll find Stote."

As he was leaving the dormitory, he almost brushed against Malcolm Douglass, who was talking with several fellows near the steps. Moved by a sudden impulse, Roger stopped and spoke to the man.

"I say, Douglass," he called, "if you're not too busy I'd like a word or two with you."

Malcolm swung round deliberately and looked Roger over, his hands deep in his pockets. "All right, Boltwood," he said, like a person who had no particular use for the one he was addressing. "There's nothing special engaging my time just at present. If you've anything you want to say to me, shoot."

Restraining his annoyance, Roger drew the fellow apart from the others. He began talking earnestly, watching the expression on Douglass' face.

"We're Yale men, you and I, Douglass. As

such, we must always stand ready to do anything in our power for the good of the university. Isn't that so?"

"That's awfully trite, Boltwood. It's the talk every Yale man makes. But what are you driving at?"

"The nine is in a bad way. It needs—it must have—another pitcher. Miss Keating told us last night that you did some pitching last summer. I suppose you played on a strictly amateur team. You're eligible for the varsity. If you're half the pitcher Miss Keating thinks you are, you should make it, too."

Douglass was silent, his face inscrutable, though deep in his dark eyes there danced a queer gleam.

"You can't fool me, Boltwood; I won't try to fool you. You ought to know just how much I like you. I'd have made the eleven last fall, only for you. I've played football as well as baseball. I'd rather pay football than baseball. I came out for the eleven. The very first day I came out I ran up against you. You were doing some coaching. You remember about it? Well, I didn't make the eleven. You were elected captain for next season. Away back of that I remember how you beat me to it as pitcher on the freshman team.

You had money, and you were somebody. You had a pull. That's how you—"

"Douglass, you're actually raving. For the love of common sense use a little reasoning power. Come, now, will you try to do something worth doing?"

"You've hurt your arm, Boltwood. Now, you want somebody to fill the hole you've made. You want somebody to help carry the team along until you can step back to the mound and take the glory of the big games, if Yale wins. Oh, I'm wise to you, Boltwood! You can't deceive me."

"You're not wise at all, Douglass. I suppose you mean that you won't even try?"

"You've got me," said Douglass. "You don't have to guess again."

CHAPTER X

THE PRICE OF RECKLESSNESS

ROGER appeared on the field when the team came out for regular practice; but, under orders from both trainer and coach, he was bound not to participate in that practice. Nevertheless, he found something to do. Half a dozen would-be pitchers had been dug up, and were on hand. The coach turned three of them over to Boltwood.

"See what you can do with these fellows," he directed. "See if they've got anything that looks at all interesting. But understand that you're not even to try to work your arm to-day. This is Drew's first year; Rackliffe and Pease came out last year, you know, but they weren't good enough to get on."

Among those who came out to watch the practice was Malcolm Douglass. He was accompanied by Newt Baxby, and Roger had seen Baxby's six-cylinder roadster standing outside the entrance to the field. With this high-powered car, Newt frequently tore up the thoroughfares in and

around New Haven. He was a reckless driver, and he had twice been arrested and fined for speeding, something of which he appeared to be rather proud. The prophecy of many persons, among whom were some who pretended to be his friends, that he would figure in a tremendous smash some day, had not given him pause.

None of the three youngsters turned over to Roger promised much, and he felt discouraged. He left the field while the others were gathering up bats, balls, gloves, and other things. Jones accompanied him.

"I'm going to foot it back," said Boltwood, as they passed Baxby's car outside the entrance. "You can catch a trolley if you want to, Jones."

"Nix!" said Handy; "I'm with you, and I'll pace you in. You know that's about all I'm good for; but they say I'm a pretty fair pacemaker."

Preferring the road to the sidewalk, they were jogging along Chapel Street at a swinging pace, Jones a stride or two in advance, when Baxby's roadster roared up from behind and went swooping past, flinging the dust over them.

"Go it, you bonehead!" exclaimed Jones. "You're due to get yours before— Great Scott!"

A touring car, crossing Chapel Street by Orchard, rolled out directly in the path of the flying

roadster. Baxby had not been sounding his horn, and the driver of the other car was wholly unwarned of his approach.

Roger's heart leaped into his throat. It seemed for an instant that the roadster would strike the touring car amidships. Baxby swerved, however, and with another second of time would have cleared the other car. As it was, he struck the rear of the touring car's tonneau, flinging it round against the curb, where it nearly upset, pitching out the driver and two women.

Apparently Douglass had started to jump. At any rate, he was hurled from the roadster, and sent spinning and rolling in the dust. Baxby's car zigzagged for an instant, the man at the wheel trying to control it. Then it shot across the sidewalk and struck a tree with a tremendous smash which nearly cut the tree down.

Leaping forward, Boltwood reached the touring car as the chauffeur was making an attempt to rise from the sidewalk. He bent over an elderly woman, who lay stunned and dazed, lifted her quickly and carried her to the grass of a near-by lawn.

"I hope you're not badly hurt," he was saying, without being aware that he was speaking at all.

She gasped for breath, looked at him strangely,



He struck the rear of the touring car's tonneau, flinging it around against the curb.

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and made motions with her gloved hands. At first he thought they were gestures of distress, then he realized that she was trying to say something, and motioning toward the car.

"Here, Jones," he said, as Handy came up, "look after this lady. There's another one—"

At first he believed the other one was pinned beneath the car. She lay there, very white and still, a slender girl, with dark hair, which curled in little waves about her ears.

Fortunately, only a portion of the girl's motor coat had been caught under the half-overtaken car. In a twinkling, almost, Roger had her out of that coat. As he lifted her in his arms her eyes opened, and she looked at him.

"You're all right," he said, seeking for words to soothe her and mitigate the shock. "I don't think the other lady is hurt much, either. You—"

Covered with dust, his clothes torn, his face cut and streaming blood, Malcolm Douglass came staggering and panting to the spot.

"Kate!" he cried hoarsely, trying to snatch the girl from Roger's arms. "Great heavens, Kate! You're not killed? It's the mercy of Providence!"

Then Boltwood knew that the girl was Douglass's sister.

CHAPTER XI

THE ECCENTRIC MRS. HERKIMER

THE wonder of it was that Newton Baxby had not been instantly killed. He was pulled from the wreck of his completely demolished roadster, and, later, an ambulance bore him away to the hospital. Although he was badly cut and bruised, he did not appear to have any broken bones, and within twenty-four hours he was out again, and able to hobble around, with the aid of a cane.

When Roger left, a big crowd of people still surrounded the two cars. Both he and Jones had told their story to the police, and their names had been taken. Roger improved an opportunity to slip away, and he had not proceeded far when Handy again appeared at his side.

"Well," said Jones, "I guess that will cook Mr. Baxby's goose."

"It will depend a great deal on the action taken by the lady who owns the other car," said Roger. "I suppose she was thankful for the time being to escape with her life."

"She's a queer little old woman, all togged out in fine clothes and jewels. She was wearing some beautiful chunks of ice."

"I didn't notice. When I saw that she seemed to be all right—"

"You gave your special attention to the younger one. Say, she was some looker—a regular queen. And that's Malc Douglass's sister! Take it from me, she can give the most of them dust."

"I don't remember much about her except that she had blue eyes and dark hair. I wonder how they happened to be in New Haven?"

Roger found Andy at the Oval. In their rooms, he told Dowling all about it. His roommate did not express great sympathy for Baxby. On the contrary he was severe.

"He's one of those mutton-headed dubs with money, who believe they have a special license to do things other men would be jailed for," said Andy. "Perhaps this will teach him a lesson."

"You mustn't forget that he's the famous 'Newby,'" said Roger, smiling.

"I don't believe he is."

"What do you mean?"

"In my judgment, he's got an upper story that would echo if you thumped it with a mallet. How anything bearing the stamp of brains can issue

from such a vacuum beats me. What does Douglass's sister look like?"

"Ask me! All I can tell you is that she has a pair of wonderful blue eyes that are almost violet. I never saw such eyes—"

"Now, come off! I think you've met Miss Doris Keating."

Roger flushed a little, and laughed. "Oh, yes; I'm not comparing her eyes with those of Doris. There's really no comparison."

Shortly after dinner, Boltwood received a telephone call. It was from Robert Deering, a wealthy manufacturer at whose home Mrs. Herkimer was staying. He stated that Mrs. Herkimer wished to ask some questions about the accident. Would he not call that evening at the Deering home, on Prospect Avenue? Roger had little desire to do this, but he felt that he could not refuse, and less than an hour later he started out to make the call.

"I'll get it over with as soon as I can," he muttered. "I suppose I'll be expected to appear as a witness against Baxby."

The Deering home was modern and somewhat pretentious. He was admitted by a butler. Mr. Deering met him in the hall and escorted him into the presence of Mrs. Herkimer, who sat propped

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up amid many pillows in a big easy-chair. She peered keenly and appraisingly at Roger as he bowed before her. He took note of the fact that, as Jones had said, she was heavily bedecked with jewels. Evidently she was a person who wore them on any and all occasions. She put out one thin hand to the college man.

"Now, tell me," she said, "do you really think that fellow who upset us was exceeding the speed limit? And let me remind you first that I sometimes like to move along myself, though I always caution my driver to be careful in town."

"I'm afraid, madam," answered Roger, "that Baxby was moving somewhat faster than the law allows."

"Oh, never mind the law! If every motorist who broke the law was arrested, the courts wouldn't have time for any other business. I mean the limit of decency that entertains a proper regard for the lives of other people."

To Roger's wonderment, she actually seemed seeking some sort of an excuse for Newton Baxby.

"Baxby's recklessness has been commented upon," he stated. "He's been arrested twice for speeding."

"Oh, land! My chauffeur was summoned to court once, and I was in the car myself. I was in

a hurry, and I had told him to drive faster. I appeared personally before the judge, took the blame, and paid the fine. Now, if there was any reason why that young man, to-day, found it necessary to drive faster than is generally thought proper—”

In spite of himself, Roger laughed. “I’ll have to let Mr. Baxby answer that, Mrs. Herkimer,” he said.

“I don’t believe he will do it again. He was fortunate to escape with his life. He’s a young man, and most young men are foolish. You don’t look foolish. I understand that your father is a manufacturer of motor cars. I understand you’ve a car yourself. Have you ever driven fast?”

“I don’t think I’ve ever exceeded ninety miles an hour.”

“There, you see—”

“But that was in a motor race. I don’t suppose I’ve ever beaten sixty in the open country, with a clear stretch of road.”

“But you might have been arrested for that. You see, everybody does it. I shall talk to this young man, Baxby. I shall tell him what I think, and I won’t mince my words. I’m really very angry with him. They say I might send him to jail; I shall give him the impression that I mean to

do so. I'm much disturbed over the loss of one of my earrings. I suppose that must have happened when we upset; but they've tried to find it, and not a trace. I shall advertise it, of course. Robert, will you please have Miss Douglass called? Ask her to bring the other earring; I'd like to show it to Mr. Boltwood. Perhaps some one of those young college men who came up after the accident happened may have found it."

In a few minutes Kate Douglass appeared. She was simply and plainly dressed, and there was fresh, warm color in her cheeks, which had been so pale when Roger first saw her lying beside the overturned automobile. But it was at her eyes that he looked. Their violet tinge seemed deeper and even more wonderful. She gave him her hand. The touch of her fingers thrilled him.

"It was you who reached us first, Mr. Boltwood. I don't think I fainted. I've never fainted, to my knowledge." Her color deepened. "I know I shut my eyes. When I opened them you were lifting me. You must know my brother, Malcolm. He was terribly frightened."

Roger became aware that her voice was scarcely less interesting than her eyes. She was a girl of refinement and surprising charm; everything about her bespoke this.

She had brought the earring, a beautiful, sea-green emerald, set off by pure white diamonds.

"I should dislike very much to lose the other," said Mrs. Herkimer. "It's not the value so much as the fact that it was given me by my husband. It may be somewhere in the grass of that lawn to which you carried me, Mr. Boltwood. I shall have that lawn raked over with a fine-tooth comb. You might try to assist me by making inquiries among the students who were there."

"I'll do so," he promised; "but it scarcely seems possible that any student would pick up anything so valuable and fail to report it at once."

Mrs. Deering came in. During the course of their chat Roger learned that, motoring through Boston, Mrs. Herkimer had planned to stop over in New Haven that night, in order that Kate Douglass might give her brother a surprise.

While they were talking, the butler announced Malcolm Douglass, and the young man entered. He was distinctly surprised and apparently not greatly pleased on discovering Roger there. One of his cheek bones, which had been cut, was patched up; otherwise he bore no mark of the accident. The manner in which his sister met him betrayed her fondness for him.

As soon after Malcolm's arrival as politeness

would permit, Roger took his departure. He carried away in his mind a rather singular impression of an eccentric little old lady bedecked with jewels, who was willing to find an excuse for a reckless young man who had nearly caused her death. That was not all. Far more vividly he recalled the vision of a slender, charming, dark-haired girl, with eyes of violet blue. But she was Malcolm Douglass's sister!

CHAPTER XII

A CHANGE OF MIND

TO Boltwood's surprise, as he was crossing the campus on his way to ten-eighty-one, just before dusk the next day, he encountered, Baxby, who stopped him.

"Just a minute, old man," said Newt, signaling with his cane. "I want to say that I think you showed yourself a brick in refusing to let the cops pump you. You could have put me in rather bad if you'd had the mind to do so."

"You don't owe me anything," returned Roger distantly. "When I found the lady you ran down didn't wish to prosecute, I decided it wasn't up to me. I will say, however, that I think you must be carrying a rabbit's foot."

"Oh, yes," agreed Newt, "I was lucky to get off with a twisted knee. My old car is junk. I'll have to have another one, and I'm thinking of buying a Keating-Comet. I'll buy it through you."

"I'm not in the business of selling cars," said Boltwood promptly, annoyed by the thought that

the man might possibly entertain the idea of trying to reward him in such a manner. "There's an agency in town."

Stepping aside, he hurried on, leaving Baxby muttering. Later, in his room, he told Dowling about it.

"That's Newt!" exclaimed Andy. "He has the idea that money will do anything. He believes every man has a price. You weren't clever, Rog; you should have sounded him out. I'll guarantee he would have offered you a premium for quick delivery. If you'd accepted, he'd have gone round telling how cheaply he bought you. He'll be of great assistance to Malcolm Douglass, now that Douglass has got in with him. I have an idea that the man's principles must be of a pretty low order."

"Meaning Douglass?"

"Yes; I heard something about him to-day. Joe Erwin, a freshman I happen to know, told me the Douglass family history. It's a spotted one."

To Roger's surprise, this statement gave him a mild sensation of disturbance and rebellion. Why he should care if the history of the Douglass family was as spotted as a leopard's skin, he could not imagine.

"Erwin knows all about the clan Douglass,"

Dowling went on. "The old man Douglass made money at one time, but his methods were somewhat shady, and he lost his fortune. How Malcolm Douglass has succeeded in getting along for the last year without the aid of his brother, who also went bad, is a matter of speculation. It is said, however, that he has been hard up at times, although he puts on a front. His particular friends are fellows with more or less money, and they're a trifle sporty, too. Douglass has to spend the coin to keep up with them. There are rumors of rather hot poker games in which he has participated. At the present time they say he's head over heels in debt. But his sister is the companion of a rich old lady, and I fancy Doug'll find a method of working the simple-minded old dame, with the aid of his sister."

Roger jumped up. "Not with her aid, Dowling—never in the world!" he protested.

"Whew!" whistled Andy. "What's the matter with you? How's it happen—"

"I've met Kate Douglas," said Roger earnestly. "I think I'm a pretty fair judge of people. No matter what Malcolm may be, no matter what his brother is or his father was, I refuse to believe Kate Douglass is anything but the soul of honor and loyalty!"

Dowling whistled again. "That nice," he said. "Always think the best of a person, especially when it's a pretty girl. But why are you so warm about it, Bolt?"

Roger tried to explain, but soon found himself floundering for words. All the while he was aware that his roommate was regarding him with suspicion and incredulity.

"Oh, confound it!" Roger finally exclaimed. "You know what I'm trying to say. I haven't any use for a man who hasn't respect and regard for any decent girl. And I wouldn't judge one by a cheap skate of a brother. Doris has a brother that no one except herself is particularly proud of. We know what Tom Keating was, yet he showed some decent, manly traits toward the last of his stay here at Yale. I'm going out for a walk before I turn in. Coming?"

"No," said Andy; "I think I'll stay and do a little grinding."

On the stairs, Roger encountered Malcolm Douglass, who stopped him.

"Boltwood," said Douglass, "would you mind coming into my room a moment? We can't talk here without somebody hearing something of what we're saying."

Surprised, Roger followed him. Morrison was

not in. Douglass closed the door behind them. His manner was that of a man facing something disagreeable, but determined to go through with it.

When Roger declined to sit down Malcolm stood with the study table between them, fumbling with a chemistry book, which he kept opening and closing.

"I'm naturally extremely sensitive," he began, in an uncertain manner. "Nothing cuts me deeper than the feeling that another man thinks himself my superior, and is inclined to patronize me. You have been in my way here at college, and I've hated you for it. Perhaps I was wrong," he spoke as if the words almost choked him.

Roger waited for him to go on. He didn't know what to say.

"I'm not going to say anything more in this line," Douglass finally declared, as if his companion were the one who was forcing him to say it. "That's enough. I don't know that I owe you anything. What little you did yesterday any man would have done. Baxby seems to feel differently about it. He's been handing me some advice. I acknowledge that what I'm doing now has come through Baxby's advice. I've never really cared much about baseball, although I've played it ever

since I can remember. If the team wants me, I'll come out. Will you tell Stote and the coach, or shall I?"

CHAPTER XIII

WAITING HIS CHANCE

WHEN the team came out for practice on the following day the appearance of Malcolm Douglass in a playing suit was a surprise to many persons. Both the captain and the coach were aware that he would show up, for Douglass had talked with them after his last interview with Boltwood.

At Roger's request, Malcolm had made no mention of him. The possibility of thus finding another pitcher in this time of need had given Stote much more satisfaction than he permitted Douglass to perceive. There was, of course, another possibility, namely, that the fellow would not be able to rise to the proper standard of efficiency; and neither the captain nor the coach were the sort to encourage false hopes.

With the exception of three other persons, probably Baxby was the only one who knew Douglass had offered to come out. Despite his lameness, Baxby was at the field, accompanied by Fenwick and Morrison, both of whom voiced their amaze-

ment at the appearance of Malcolm with the squad.

"Well, what do you know about old Doug!" spluttered Fenwick, staring. "After all the talk he made, too!"

"The deceiving scoundrel!" Morrison laughed. "And he never breathed it to me!"

"How in the world did it happen?" speculated Fenwick.

Baxby promptly took the credit. "I advised him to do it. It required considerable argument and persuasion on my part."

"I never thought *you'd* be so interested," confessed Fenwick. "Why, if he gets on, which I very much doubt, he'll simply plug a hole temporarily made by Boltwood's lameness. It will be aid for Boltwood in his resting up for the big games. If that man had to do some pitching now and then, he'd probably keep himself in the crippled class."

Baxby swelled out his chest. "And that would be a misfortune for Yale," he said ponderously. "Regardless of personal likes and dislikes, we should only hope and work for the good of the college."

In spite of himself, Morrison snickered. The idea of Douglass making any self-sacrifice for the college was amusing, knowing his roommate as he

did. Nor could he imagine Baxby as one who would worry over Yale's unpromising baseball prospects.

Having started the other players at practice through fungo batting, both Stote and the coach gave their attention to Douglass. The captain donned his big mitt and stood off to catch, while the coach placed himself behind Malcolm, where he could talk to him quietly. In a few minutes they learned that Douglass had good control, some speed, and a curve ball which he once or twice caused to break sharply. He was not encouraged to work his arm too much or too hard. Boltwood could not resist the desire to stroll up behind the coach to see what Douglass had. When the coach turned away, he saw Roger standing there, and said, in a low tone:

"It's mighty strange about this man. Of course, nobody can judge him until he's seen working in a game, but I'm in hopes he's the individual we've been yearning for. I say, Boltwood, you ought to be able to give him some finish."

Roger shook his head. "No," he returned guardedly; "I've had one experience trying to coach him. He won't stand for it from me."

A little later, to his surprise, Douglass approached him and asked him about throwing the

fade-away, a deceptive ball which Boltwood had learned to command.

"I can't throw it for you," said Roger; "but I can show you how to hold it, and try to tell you how to pitch it." This he proceeded to do, Douglass listening attentively and seriously the while.

Up on the seats, Fenwick and Morrison wondered greatly. Baxby was silent; but his face, usually stolid and lacking in expression, wore a knowing look.

Throwing to one of the change catchers, Stote now being employed with the rest of the players, Douglass tried vainly to catch the kink of the fade-away. In spite of all Roger could tell him, he did not succeed.

"I reckon," he finally said, "that you and Christy Mathewson are the only two men who have it down fine."

In batting practice, Douglass showed good form, and met the ball in a manner which indicated that he "had an eye." He swung freely, sharply, and easily, without slashing or trying to slug, and his hits went out on a line. He could run the bases, too, although, of course, his wind was not what it would have been had he kept himself in condition. The coach was particular not to let him go too far on this first day at the field.

When it was all over, he was invited to appear at training table. Rarely, if ever before, had such a thing happened. But the situation was unusual; the case was desperate, and Douglass seemed to be a straw worth grasping at.

The majority of Yale's scheduled games to come were to be played at home. Of the teams met during the Southern trip, Georgetown was doubtless the most formidable, and Georgetown was now making a tour in the North, and winning a majority of the games played. On Tuesday, the following week, this fast bunch of collegians from the Potomac would reach New Haven. On Saturday, the day after Douglass came out, Yale played Columbia, and Malcolm, with the eagerness of youth, was secretly hopeful of getting into at least a few innings of the game. Despite his lack of recent experience, he believed he could acquit himself well, and now that he had begun, he yearned to show what he could do.

Pascal pitched the whole of the Columbia game—pitched it, and lost it. Starting off like a whirlwind, his fast ball seemed to dazzle the Manhattanites, and, for the first five innings, his smoke prevented the visitors from reaching first. Keeping the sacks clear in his manner, Pascal went along beautifully while Yale gathered two tallies.

Those who knew Pascal, however, were not satisfied that those two runs gave the locals a margin of safety.

In the sixth, with one down, an error let a Columbia batter get on. Then the Yale pitcher betrayed his weakness, and every sack was tenanted when a terrifically long drive to the outfield promised more than enough runs to let Columbia even up. A sensational, running one-handed catch by Guy Brisbane dashed the hopes of the visitors and doubtless saved Pascal from a benching. It was uncomfortably close.

On the bench, where he sat beside Boltwood, Douglass had fretted.

"Why don't they let me warm up, too?" he said, glancing toward Regan and the change catcher, who, in the distance, had resumed work with a ball when Columbia threatened. "I think I've got the measure of the most of these fellows. I'm sure I could go in there and hold them."

"And lame your arm, as I did, possibly," returned Roger. "You forget that you haven't been pitching, and your wing must be soft. That would leave us crippled and about as bad off as before. Better lose this game than to have such a thing happen."

When he saw Brisbane make that catch which

roused the Yale crowd to admiring cheering, he added:

"Now Pascal will have clean cushions behind him next inning, and he ought to go along nicely as long as runners can be kept off them."

In the seventh and eighth Pascal was again unhittable. With only one more inning to be played, Regan came in to the bench. Douglass was silent and disappointed.

With the opening of the ninth old Trouble again turned his frown on Yale. The first Columbia batter met a whistler coming hot from Pascal's fingers, and reversed its course with such vigor that Gray let the ball go through him. The home team had acquired no further lead, and Stote felt an instant twinge of apprehension. Nevertheless, Pascal struck out the next man. While he was doing so, however, the runner who had benefited by Gray's bobble, stole second.

With that runner behind his back, Pascal became extremely nervous. Either he was afraid to put the ball over, or he had suddenly lost control, for he walked the next man.

Right there Columbia sprang a surprise. A pinch hitter was put in, a man who had the reputation of knocking the cover off the ball. To the consternation of the Yale players, this fellow

dropped a bunt in front of the pan, and so by surprise did his performance take Pascal that the pitcher was too slow in getting the ball and throwing to first. The sacks were all covered, with only one out.

Regan slipped off his sweater, while Stote talked to Pascal in front of the pan. Pascal went back to the mound and pitched again. He put the ball across with plenty of speed, but somehow the jump he sought to stick on it was not there. The Columbia batter slugged out a double, on which all three men ahead of him scored. When he attempted to stretch that double into a triple he was thrown out at third; but Columbia led by a tally.

It was no credit to Pascal that the next hitter popped an easy infield fly; again the Yale pitcher had handed up a straight one with nothing on it.

Try desperately though the Yale players did in the last half of the ninth, they could not push a man round to the home anchorage, and the game ended with the visitors hilariously victorious.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHANCE COMES

PRACTICE on Monday found Douglass still trying to acquire the fade-away.

"If you'd pitch it for me once or twice, Boltwood, I might catch the kink," he said.

"I'm sorry I can't," returned Roger. "I would in a minute, but I'm still under orders to keep my wing absolutely loafing, and I may be for some time to come. Has Mrs. Herkimer recovered her lost earring?"

"I don't think so," was the answer. "She hadn't yesterday. Too bad that happened. It has really annoyed her more than the accident."

"When does she think of leaving town?"

"I don't think she's decided. The longer she stays the better I'll like it, for it keeps my sister here. Kate will be at the game to-morrow. I told her it was possible that I might be given a chance to pitch. Think I'll get it, Boltwood?"

"That's not for me to say, but I wouldn't be at all surprised if they had to use you in a part of the game, anyhow."

"That's what I'm looking for. I reckon my arm is all right. Why, I haven't even lamed it a bit in practice."

Coming out with the team on Tuesday afternoon, Roger found himself, whenever it was possible to do so, surveying the gathering crowd that came pouring into the stands. Not until some time after the game began, however, and then by surreptitiously watching Douglass, did he discover the location of the person he sought. She was there, bearing a Yale banner, accompanied by a sprightly, middle-aged woman, whom Boltwood recognized with surprise as Miss Davis, a once famous "college widow," now somewhat passé. Then he remembered that he had heard that Miss Davis was a relative of the Deerings.

The game opened with Regan on the slab for Yale. Besides Douglass and Pascal two of the forlorn-hope pitchers had warmed up, but it was pretty certain that neither of the latter would be used unless the run of the game should be so disastrously against Yale that, with no chance to win, it would be good policy to save the better men.

Georgetown had some sluggers, and they hammered out one run in the first inning. Yale was unable to retaliate in her half, for Hollywood, the

visitors' first-string pitcher, was in excellent form.

The second round gave neither team a tally, but in the third Georgetown's heavy hitters got at Regan again and came near chasing him to the bench. They accumulated two more tallies.

"Why don't they let me go in?" muttered Douglass. "Regan can't hold that bunch."

Yale desperately assaulted Hollywood and succeeded in getting a score, which, however, was presented them through a bad throw to the plate. In the fourth, having apparently sized Regan up, the visitors resumed their bombardment. With only one down, they scored twice. Then Regan fumbled an easy roller, and two men were on the sacks.

Stote made an excuse to rush to the bench for something. A word or two passed between him and the coach. Douglass, eagerly waiting, shed his sweater at a signal, and ran out to limber his arm a little.

A fortunate double play checked Georgetown, but the score was five to one, and Regan's performance was ended for the day. Douglass went in with the opening of the next inning.

Douglass was given a cheer as he toed the slab. One tally still stood as the full record of Yale's scoring. Georgetown was confident of batting any

man the Nutmeggers could put in; they believed their opponent had started the game with the best pitcher available. Having heard rumors of Boltwood's trouble, they feared no one else. Against such a team of fighting harps, any young college pitcher would have his work cut out for him, and Douglass, who never before had ascended the mound in a real game for his varsity, was placed in a particularly trying position. It seemed lucky for him that he now had to face the lower-division men of Georgetown's batting order, who, if there were any light hitters on the team, were the weakest. Adams, the second baseman, was the first to pit his skill against Malcolm, and Regan had fanned Adams twice.

"You can get this wind pounder, Dug," called Stote softly, as he crouched and signaled for the curve Regan had used so effectively on the man. "He's got a lame eye."

But Adams, remembering just what the other pitcher had used to fool him, guessed right, and smashed a single past Jack Inman, who missed it by a foot. The coachers chortled. The one at first ran to the sack and made a pretense of taking an anxious squint into one of the successful batter's optics.

"A lame eye is better than a lame head," he

said. "They haven't got anything to bother a blind man to-day."

It was an unpropitious start, and apprehension settled swiftly over the Yale crowd. If the new pitcher could not do better than that, he wouldn't last as long as Regan, and doubtless this game would mark his first and last appearance for the Elis.

In strong contrast to the previous batting of Adams was that of Sweeny, who followed him. Up to this point, Sweeny's hitting percentage for the game was one thousand. He had made Regan look like the easiest sort of mark.

"Never mind, old man," said Stote soothingly. "Accidents will happen. Once in a million times they can shut their eyes and get a hit."

Douglass's face was grim; he was not the smiling sort. Nevertheless, he betrayed few symptoms of nervousness, and when Stote signaled again, having driven Adams back to the initial sack a couple of times, Malcolm winged one over high on the inside corner. Sweeney fouled it.

"That a nibble," called the coacher at third. "Now take a good bite, Sween, old man."

Following Stote's directions, Douglass made a pitch-out. The Yale captain had fancied Adams would try to steal in order to obviate the danger

of a double play on a force, and he had made no mistake. The little chap went down fast, but Stote's throw beat him to the second sack. To the dismay of the Yale representatives present, Inman muffed the ball and Adams slid safely. "Everybody's doing it," sang one of the delighted coaches.

Boltwood, his elbows on his knees, was watching Douglass intently from the bench. If the man was yellow, if he lacked sand, it seemed that he must show it now. Realizing, as he certainly did, that he was under trial before the eyes of the watching undergraduates, his teammates, and the coach, he would need nerve of a high order to steady him in this emergency. The test of these trying minutes meant far more to Douglass than an outsider could have imagined. Success would lift him into prominence and unbar the gate to many possibilities; failure would relegate him to the ranks of the incompetents who had tried for big things and fallen with a thud. Should this thought seize upon him, bringing with it fear and doubt, his chance of success would be about one in five. To Roger's relief, the man did not flush with annoyance or anger; his face lost a bit of its color, but not enough to make him appear pale and shaky. His lips were pressed together, his nos-

trils slightly dilated, and he was calm and deliberate even to slowness in his movements.

"I was afraid of his temper," thought Roger. "Perhaps he can control it, after all. If he only could get Sweeny!"

After an attempt to hold Adams close to second, Douglass pitched again, suddenly, to Sweeny. It was a wide curve, and the Georgetown catcher let it pass for the second called ball.

"He don't dare to put 'em within reach, Sween," asserted a coacher. "Wait and take a little stroll."

Sweeny seemed to think the advice good, and another high one on the inside corner evened things up. "Now you've got him where you want him," said Stote, in his most cheerful manner. He'll have to swing at the next one."

This was not a truthful prophecy, for, apparently trying to work the same ball, the Yale twirler got the next one too high, and Sweeny disdained it. "That's all he has," said the coacher at first. "A high ball and a supplication to the gods," supplemented the one at third.

Stote signaled; Douglass nodded. Babe Adams took a longer lead toward third. Suddenly the pitcher whirled and snapped the ball to second. Adams slid back under Carver's hand by an ex-

tremely narrow margin of safety. "If he'd got that man," muttered Boltwood, "it might have given him the brace-up he needs."

Stote crouched again. Malcolm poised himself, and Sweeney set for the swing, if his judgment should warrant it. A hush fell on the field. The pitcher's arm swung and uncoiled like a whiplash. "High again," was the thought that flashed through Sweeney's brain.

He was wrong; it was a drop, a beautiful drop that cut the plate on the batter's side. Sweeney realized this too late to try to hit. The umpire's thumb, jerked over his shoulder, proclaimed the Georgetown man's misjudgment, and a Yale cheer leaped forth from the stand.

Boltwood took a long breath, and smiled as he saw Sweeney turn disgustedly toward the bench. "That should do it, if anything can," said Roger to Pascal, who sat near. "That should give him heart."

"It should," agreed the other pitcher; "but you know Sweeney's really one of their weakest hitters. He simply chanced to take Regan's measure both times, that's all. Hollywood can't hit, either, but remember what Adams did."

Hollywood connected with the second ball delivered to him, and pounded a bounder at Hippy

Carver. Carver, coming in for it on the jump, gauged the bound nicely, and spent a moment in threatening Adams, who ducked back to second. Then the Yale shortstop wafted the sphere across to first for an unquestionable put-out.

The tension had relaxed marvelously, and the color came creeping back into Malcolm Douglass's face, although he did not indulge in a smile. Of course, the Yale crowd cheered again. They were doing their part to put heart into the new man.

Now, however, it was the head of the batting order that Douglass had to face, and McKabe knew how to make any pitcher go the limit. Stote realized this, and was aware that efforts to pull the sure-eyed Georgetown left fielder were almost fruitless and worked to the disadvantage of the pitcher. With this thought in his mind, he signaled Douglass to keep the ball high on the inside corner.

Unfortunately, McKabe was one of those batters who always seem willing to reach first by some other means than a hit. To get on was his great purpose, and he was ready and prepared to accomplish this through any legitimate device. So when the Yale pitcher delivered that first ball, shoulder high and a bit too close, McKabe made a pretense of dodging, throwing up his elbow as

if to protect himself. The ball struck his back-arm and glanced off. He trotted to first, grinning like a Cheshire cat, and Stote's protests were not heeded by the umpire.

Although he knew that the man intended to get hit, Douglass made no demonstration of the annoyance he felt; nor did he waste glances on the grinning McKabe.

Hardy, who came next, was a vicious single-hitter, and Malcolm put his mind on the problem of working this dangerous man, who, should he secure the right sort of a bingle, might enable Adams, at least, to add to Georgetown's top-heavy lead. Stote was apprehensive also, and through his efforts to prevent Douglass from putting one over that Hardy would be liable to hit safely, he was mainly the cause of the pass the pitcher handed the Georgetowner. The sacks were full!

The sacks were full, and Mike Mahoney, the slugger, was marching out to the plate, his deadly bat on his shoulder. This, after all, was the great crisis of the inning, the time to test the mettle of Malcolm Douglass.

CHAPTER XV

THE LUCKY SEVENTH

NEVER in any game had Roger Boltwood worked harder. Doomed to sit on the bench and watch a pitcher who was an unknown quantity, his brain was tremendously active. Not a signal did Stote give, not a move did Douglass make, but Roger tried to figure it out in advance; and thus far, three times out of four, he could have made accurate, close-time predictions concerning what would happen.

"If Mahoney hits, it's an even bet he'll drive in two men," he muttered.

"He'll hit," said Pascal. "They're playing deep for him. There's just about one chance, and that's to get his long drive when he hoists it out. Too bad Douglass walked Hardy; this man is worse."

The Georgetown coaches were barking away, one in sharp staccato, the other in booming bass. With the exception of Mahoney himself, the players seemed keyed to a high tension. The big first-baseman of the visitors held himself with an

indifferently confident and assured air, measuring Yale's new pitcher with a speculative and disdainful eye.

Stote continued his soothing assurances. "Just as easy as the easiest, Dug. He swings from his toe nails, and that kind always look worse than they really are."

"That's right, chirk the lad up," said Mahoney out of the corner of his mouth without taking his gaze from the Yale pitcher. "He needs it. His shoes are refrigerators."

The trio of runners worked off the cushions and crouched, ready to leap away the instant the big batsman nailed the sphere on the trade-mark. They believed he would do it. He came near doing it to the first ball Malcolm shot over, and the foul went into the crowd in the stands.

"That's just a sample!" boomed the hoarse-voiced coach. "Straighten it out, Mike!"

The next one was higher than the thatch of Mahoney's head, and Mike simply cast a contemptuous glance skyward.

"Better walk him," called the shrill-voiced coacher. "It'll be a homer if you don't."

Douglass wasted another. "All right," said Stote; "make him hit the next one. He won't kill it."

Mahoney fouled again, hammering the ball along the ground just outside the third-base line. "Now you're as good as he is, and a little better," said the Yale captain, with a laugh.

The pitcher took plenty of time, and tried a sharp-breaking curve, which, however, missed the pan. "Three balls," said the umpire.

"If he grooves it," called the coacher at third, "we know where it will go."

When it was thrown back to him, Douglass turned the sphere over and over in his hands, leaning forward with his eyes on Mahoney. "Let it come," urged the latter. "You can't put it over; you don't dare to," and he did a little fox trot at the plate.

With continued deliberation, Malcolm swung into the movements for pitching. Stote had called for a drop, and Douglass did his best to put everything he had on the ball. It was a beauty in every respect, and the mighty Mahoney missed it by several inches.

There was an instant of dead silence, as if the witnesses could not believe the untried Yale pitcher had fanned the Georgetown slugger in this crisis. Then the Yale yell leaped forth, followed by a rousing cheer for Malcolm Douglass. The Yale players came dancing in from the field, com-

plimenting their twirler. Stote met Malcolm, and walked toward the bench at his side.

"That drop was a peach!" Art laughed as he spoke. "You started it pretty high, but I had to dig the old ball out of the dirt. That certainly was getting out of a real hole."

Douglass nodded gravely. "I felt that I'd simply got to get out of it," he returned. "When you called for that drop, I knew it was the only ball that would do the trick. If I'd tried to whip over a fast, straight one, that man would have busted the stitches."

Roger met Malcolm with a compliment that was unquestionably sincere. "That was a test of your mettle," he told him. "You demonstrated that you are made of the real stuff. If you hadn't believed you could do it, the chances would have been more than three to one that you would have failed. Now you've got the confidence of the team."

The Georgetowners, apparently convinced that they would not find the new pitcher as easy as Regan, were prepared to fight hard to hold the lead acquired.

Again facing the top of Yale's order, Hollywood burned the ball over with all the speed he could put on it, frequently giving it a baffling

jump. Gray struck out. Hardy hoisted a high fly, which was caught. Inman batted a bone-breaker through Babe Adams. Buck Rollins, the clean-up man, reckoned by many to be as formidable a slugger as Mahoney, smashed a tremendous drive into deep center. Had not Riley, who looked after that distant garden, been swift on his pins and a fielder of judgment in gauging such bingles, Yale would certainly have added something to her puny tally; but Riley made a great catch, and another chance for the Bulldog went glimmering.

The success of Douglass on the slab had plainly given him the full meed of confidence he needed. Truxton, hardly less dangerous than Mahoney, found one of Malcolm's slants, it is true; but the hit was a weak bounder to the pitcher himself, who easily threw the runner out. Sinclair did not do as well; after fouling twice, he whiffed. Then Riley slashed at three balls without touching one of them.

Hollywood retaliated by fanning three men in succession, the last one being Stote himself. "We've got it sewed up," said Mahoney, as he jogged in from first. "If we can ever get another start on this man Douglass, we'll add a few more marks to our accumulation."

Apparently Douglass had no intention of per-

mitting them to get that start if it lay in him to prevent it; for, though he did not send them all down by the strike-out route, like Hollywood, he disposed of the three hitters in succession.

Yale came to bat in the seventh with Douglass up, and, after missing one of Hollywood's shoots, Malcom gauged another correctly and rapped out a nice safety. Then, while Furbush was fanning, he pilfered a cushion.

Boltwood was now on the coaching line at third, and, with the first-string men coming up again, he was hopeful. Douglass had started the ball rolling; it was up to the top-liners to keep it going. Working Hollywood to the limit, and spoiling five good ones by fouling them all, Gray finally had the satisfaction of getting a pass.

The first ball deliver to Riddle was a strike, although he made no move to swing. On the second ball pitched, Douglass and Gray pulled off the double steal, and put it through successfully.

By this time the Yale crowd was rooting for runs, and the Georgetowners fully realized what menaced them. Hollywood whipped them across to Riddle without a particle of mercy for his arm. Nevertheless, old Horace got one on the end of his club and pounded it, whining, into right field. Boltwood, instantly sure that the fielder could not

make the catch, sent Douglass home, and waved Gray to follow as the latter came speeding up from second. The bounding ball was secured by the fielder, who made a throw to the plate, but Gray slid and was safe by two feet, at least. On the throw in, Riddle took second.

"That's the way to do it!" cried Roger, as soon as he could make himself heard above the cheering. "This last-laugh business always tastes best. Come on now, Inman, let's tie up right here in the lucky seventh."

But Inman popped up a foul which was a ripe cherry for Sweeny, and, with two gone, Buck Rollins was given a Yale cheer which seemed to hold a touch of entreaty.

Rollins was mad; he was almost vicious. Fourth on the list, he had not yet made a hit. Moreover, when Hollywood fooled him twice, it began to look as if he would fail again. But Buck was always dangerous as long as he had one chance left to swing. This time that chance was enough. The crack with which he met the ball rang clear and loud, and the sphere fled, shrieking, into the far corner of the outfield, where it struck fair, and then bounded into the seats.

The lucky seventh had been lucky indeed. Rollins had made a homer and tied up the score.

Nevertheless, Yale would not quickly forget that the new pitcher, Douglass, had started the movement in the right direction by leading off with a hit.

CHAPTER XVI

TO THE LAST GASP

WHEN the uproarious cheering died down, Brisbane struck out. Nevertheless, the Yale players took the field in high spirits. They believed now that victory would be theirs, and snatching a game from the coals, with the Georgetowners for opponents, would surely be a performance to rejoice over.

On the other hand, the visitors were aroused to wrath by the freak fortune seemed to have played them. Nevertheless, they were mostly Irish, and the Irish never quit fighting as long as there is the tiniest shred of a chance. As quitters, their percentage is amazingly low. Therefore, with their hard hitters coming up in the eighth, they went at Douglass as if they believed they could hammer him all over the lot, and meant to do it without delay. McKabe opened by smashing a line drive into left field, where Hod Riddle made a running shoe-string catch that won him an ovation from the stands.

That was an unfavorable beginning for the

visitors; but a few second later Hardy pounded a skipping grounder through the infield and forced Riddle to hustle and make a sharp throw to second in order to hold the hit down to a single.

Mahoney followed—Mahoney, the dread of all college pitchers. “This is where you get even, Mike,” called Riley confidently. “Sting it! Kill it! Give us a tally. One will be enough.”

“Douglass never can fan that man a second time,” said more than one anxious spectator.

Malcolm plainly knew what he was up against. Had his life depended upon it, he could not have pitched harder. Three times Mahoney fouled those smokers, and then he nailed one full and fair. The outfielders had been playing back for the drive. It went shooting over Inman’s head, with both right and center fielders racing to reach it. They knew what it meant to miss that one. Gray was the nearest, but few witnesses believed he could reach the ball. In the last twenty feet or so, he shot forward with increasing speed, and made a catch that probably robbed Mahoney of a three-bagger, if not of a home run. McKabe, waiting well down the line, was driven back to first.

While the cheering rolled across the field, Douglass filled his lungs with a deep breath of relief

and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. For the first time, something like a faint, grim smile crept round the corners of his mouth.

"It's all right, Dong, old man," came the cheerful voice of Stote. "That was their last gasp. Now we've got 'em."

Malcolm longed to strike Truxton out. Such a performance would surely fix his standing as a pitcher, and, with the live ball that was in use, Truxton might have better luck than Mahoney, should he hit it fair. Twice the Yale twirler fooled the Georgetownner. The third time the latter swung his bat, however, he hammered a hummer straight at Hippy Carver. It nearly lifted Carver off his feet, but the shortstop held it just the same.

Again Stote waited for Douglass, and walked to the bench with him. "I'm sure we've got them," he said. "Their best hitters are gone. If they'd made one run, they might have walked off with it, after all. Now your arm is still all right—"

"Don't worry about my arm," returned Malcolm. "With that kind of support, I'll win this game if I have to pitch it off."

The Yale captain sat down for a moment beside Roger. "The man's got the stuff," he asserted in a low, deeply satisfied tone. "What I can't

understand is how he has been overlooked here so long. Why has he been keeping his light under a bushel?"

"I believe his explanation of it is that he prefers football," replied Roger. "You know, he's tried two years for the eleven, and failed."

"Thus far there's nothing resembling a failure about his trial for the nine. We need one tally now. You take the line at third again, Roger."

Carver literally ached to get at least a safety from Hollywood. Eventually, however, the Georgetown slabman forced the Yale shortstop into hoisting a foul back of third, which Sinclair easily caught.

"That's the stuff, old boy," barked Sweeney. "We'll put this over into extra innings, if it's necessary to win it that way. Here's Captain Stote, and you've got his number."

This seemed to be true, for, with the exception of Furbush, Stote was the only Yale player who had not obtained a semblance of a hit. Ordinarily, too, he was a pretty fair batter. Longing to start something which would break the dead-lock, as well as possessed by a desire to make his batting record for the day look better, Art tried hard to pick out one of Hollywood's good ones and hit it safely. He did hit the ball at last, but

it went hopping down just inside the line ahead of him, and Mahoney made the put-out, unassisted.

Douglass was up again. Of course, he was greeted with a cheer. This was his chance to get away with a batting average of one thousand, and he heard voices imploring him to remember what he did the last time, and to start things up again.

Hollywood steamed the first one over high and close, and those which followed were each a shade higher, three of them being sufficient to lure the new pitcher into swinging under them all. As he missed the last one, he concealed with difficulty his disappointment and vexation.

"That's all right, old man," said Stote. "We can't all hit every time. Remember, all you have to do is to hold 'em now."

But Sinclair led off with a hit, and Riley promptly sacrificed him to second. Crouching, Babe Adams lured Malcolm into a hole, getting three balls without having a single strike called on him. The next one was a strike, but following that the Yale pitcher put one over a trifle too high, and Adams walked.

"I knew it!" roared Mahoney, on the line back of first. "Here's where the airship goes up. Make him put them over, Sweeny. He can't find the platter. He'll hand you a pass, too."

Sweeny would be followed by Hollywood, and then the heavy hitters would come up again. Douglass was aware of this, and he felt that everything depended on getting Sweeny. Seeking for absolute command of himself, he burned over the first one for a called strike.

"That's right," said Stote, as the ball spanked into his glove. "Keep on waiting, Sweeny. You'll have a chance to sit down and rest in a minute."

Malcolm took great pains to hold both runners close. A successful double steal just now would increase the danger tremendously. Mahoney sought to annoy him by shouting for the umpire to make him face the batter. Douglass had no idea of balking; when he did pitch, the delivery was legitimate, though he got the ball off with a snap and without any preliminary movements. Sweeny, hesitating, heard another strike called.

"He's lost his control," came in the chuckling voice of Stote. "You see, he can't find the platter. Keep on waiting—do."

Something like a growl gurgled in Sweeny's throat. Gripping his bat, he held himself ready. Moreover, he guessed that Douglass would not waste one then—and guessed right. His eye was good; he hit the ball a ringing crack.

So much after the manner of a bullet fired from a gun did the sphere shoot at Douglass that at least one-third of the spectators failed to catch a glimpse of it in transit. Malcolm barely had time to get his hands up, but he caught it. Instantly he whirled, even as he staggered back a little; and, as he turned, he saw Inman leaping to cover second.

Sinclair had persisted in creeping away from the sack, and when the ball was hit, he scarcely knew where it went until he beheld Douglass swinging round and his arm going back at the same time to throw. Of course, Sinclair plunged back to the sack as quickly as he could, but, coming across, Inman took the throw and dived at the sliding man. He got him, too, by a foot.

There was a tremendous tumult in the stands, for this double play sent the undergraduates into an admiring uproar. The blue banners seemed to be fluttering everywhere, and not a few hats were tossed into the air. Douglass and Inman were cheered again and again. It was a game worth seeing, and one worth winning.

Yale had not yet won, however, and there were many regrets expressed when Furbush was seen walking out to lead off. As every one expected, he fanned. Gray, who followed, heard pleading

appeals for a hit. Nevertheless, after his own style, he compelled Hollywood to go the limit, and, in doing so, finally forced the Georgetown pitcher to give him what he was after, a walk to first.

Whether or not this upset Hollywood, he promptly proceeded to bore Riddle in the ribs with a speedy ball. For sixty seconds Hod was doubled up, gasping for breath, but he finally trotted slowly down to first. With only one out, two men were on the cushions again, and it certainly looked like Yale's chance. Inman was the hitter, with old Buck Rollins waiting to follow him. It was a tense moment.

Hollywood began on Inman by burning over à strike. His speed was terrific, and Sweeny dropped the ball, which went spinning away a few feet. This was luck for Yale, for the runners had started to make a double steal, and a quick, sure throw would probably have caught one of them. Sweeny did throw to third, although even as he made the heave he realized it was too late.

Inman caught a signal which was conveyed to Gray by Boltwood. It called for a squeeze play after waiting for one more pitched ball. As had been expected, Hollywood tried to pull the batter with that next ball, but failed. Then he got a

shoot over, and Inman managed to dump it into the diamond.

Gray was racing for the plate when the sphere left Hollywood's fingers, and he had no difficulty in scoring.

The game was over, and Malcolm Douglass had been chiefly responsible for a victory, on his first appearance as a college pitcher.

CHAPTER XVII

THE MAN OF THE HOUR

AS college men do who have been enthused by a victory of their team in a sensational uphill game, a host of the undergraduates poured on to the field, captured the captain and the new pitcher, and, cheering, bore them around on their shoulders. Of course, it was not such a demonstration as would have followed victory in one of the big games against Harvard, but it was caused in no small degree by the unexpected discovery of a clever twirler in this, Yale's time of need. Protesting, Stote had sought to make his escape, a move which Douglass imitated, although in his secret heart he was immensely glad that his protests seemed to fall on deaf ears. This being given a shoulder ride on Yale's athletic field was something he had dreamed of a thousand times.

"Ring off, you simp!" cried Fenwick, who had his right leg, answering Malcolm's entreaties to be put down. "You're it, to-day. Old Baxby'd be here only for his lameness. Hear them cheering you!"

Roger Boltwood, lingering at the bench to look after his own particular pet bat, which Rollins had used, heard a voice calling to him—a voice that gave him a quickened pulsebeat and made him look up instantly. She was there, a short distance away, just beyond the rail, her face flushed and happy. He went over to her, lifting his cap.

“Your brother certainly made good with a vengeance, Miss Douglass,” he said. “It was the finest sample of twirling I’ve seen in many a day.”

“I’m so delighted I scarcely know what to do, Mr. Boltwood. I was dreadfully afraid he’d fail even to win approval, and, if he did, I knew he’d never try again. He had an idea that luck and sentiment were against him.”

Her words sent a thought flashing through Roger’s mind: Douglass might not be what was generally considered a quitter, but his temperament and his enormous vanity made him a sulker, and a man of that disposition is frequently more difficult to understand and handle than a quitter.

In the stress of the moment, Kate Douglass apparently had forgotten her companion, Miss Davis, who waited near with the passing people brushing against her as they moved toward the exit. Kate, though naturally not in the chattering class, babbled on:

"I don't believe I'd have come if I'd known how the suspense would affect me. Once or twice I could scarcely get my breath. I thought Malcolm was going to fail; I thought they were going to bat him hard and make a lot of scores. I knew what that would mean to him, for he told me how much depended on his success if he got a chance to pitch to-day. You know, he's very ambitious, and he hopes for certain college honors."

Roger knew, and he felt certain that his chances had that day multiplied twice over, at least. "He ought to have a prospect of getting almost anything after this," he assured her without a trace of envy.

Having taken no part in the demonstration on the field, Andy Dowling, passing out, caught his roommate's eye and gave him a significant look. There was something in that look which brought color to Boltwood's cheeks and made him feel somewhat like a kid who has been detected cheating in a game of marbles. Realizing this, Roger's resentment flared up instantly, and he almost glared at Dowling's back as Andy walked on with the passing throng.

Later, in the gymnasium, as Hawkin was giving Roger's lame arm the regular daily massaging, he heard the men talking of Douglass and his sur-

prising success. It was evident that Malcolm was the college sensation of the hour.

At dinner it was the same, only in a somewhat different way, for Douglass was present. After their usual custom, the other players praised him by inversion, handing him left-handed compliments. They told him he had been a mark, hadn't shown a semblance of a curve, had barely been able to heave the ball from the mound to the plate, and had betrayed the existence of a profound vacuum in his noddle in all the pinches. Understanding, Malcolm agreed fully, crediting his sensational support with the honor of winning the game. But he did it with a swagger he could not hide to save himself, that betrayed his conceit. He left with Stote.

When the door had closed behind them, Buster Coy remarked, with a chuckle: "It's a shame that man hates himself so much."

"And," said Hippy Carver, "the talk everybody's making about him is bound to add tremendously to his load of dejection."

"But he really can pitch, me lads," declared Jack Inman. "I was in position to see what he had, and, believe me, it's the stuff. With Bolt apparently done for, Douglass provides our only hope of stopping Harvard this year."

Roger heard this with something like a shock. So they believed he was hopelessly done for! The doctor, or perhaps the masseur, doubtless had expressed the belief that there was no chance for his arm to come back. He himself had feared, but even fear had not killed the last spark of hope.

So he was done with baseball! He would pitch no more! Another man, hitherto unknown in the game, would fill his place. Was it also possible that his wretched arm would handicap him at football, too? Was it possible that his athletic days at Yale were past and gone?

Sudden anger at ill fortune assailed him. He had babied and coddled his arm, using it scarcely more than he would had it been paralyzed. If the old wing was done for, where was the sense of pampering it? Snatching up a paper weight, he hurled it against the wall with a crash. His arm gave a twinge. In his shoulder there was a snap, as if something had broken—the same sort of a snap he heard and felt on the field that day when he pitched the fatal smoker to Slash Jennings.

CHAPTER XVIII

FORTY PLUNKS' WORTH

THE following morning, as he dressed, Roger found himself unconsciously doing the most of the work with his left hand. As soon as he realized this, he put the other hand into action. "Might as well make you do something," he thought. "Even if I can't pitch, you're not going to loaf on me any longer than is necessary."

Somehow, it seemed that he could use his right arm somewhat more freely; and, feeling cautiously of his shoulder, he was surprised and puzzled to discover that it did not seem nearly as painful and tender as it had been. He did not speak of this to Dowling.

That afternoon, Douglass came out to the field with Baxby and Fenwick in Baxby's new touring car, the very latest model of one of the costliest machines made in America. Baxby had succeeded in getting another car without delay, but it was not a Keating-Comet.

To confess the truth, Boltwood had considered remaining away from the field this day, for he

knew he would be obliged to endure seeing Douglass made much of by the other players. But heretofore he had missed no regular practice, and now he declined to let anything like childish envy keep him sulking in his tent. So he was there, and, not without an effort, he spoke approvingly to Malcolm of his work against Georgetown.

Douglass smiled with the superciliousness Roger had dreaded. "Oh, yes," he replied; "I was able to deliver the goods when I got my chance. It would have been the same at football. Of course, I'd never have had the chance if you hadn't been knocked out for good. They say that's always the way in this world—one man profits by another's misfortune."

Roger turned away. Malcolm's pretended friendliness of the past few days had been a subterfuge of the lowest order, and now that he no longer felt the need of keeping it up, he was more than willing to drop the mask. Slightly disdainful now, when good luck should have wedged him more securely in his lofty niche he would be again the same acrimonious individual, swayed by prejudice and hatred, without a shade of fair reasoning or justice. Could Yale place reliance on such a self-seeker?

Douglass did not appear at training table that

night; in advance he had made some excuse for his absence.

Coming out, after he had satisfied his somewhat balky appetite, Roger encountered Cullen Bryant and Chat Mumford at the corner of High Street, and paused to chat with them a moment. Bryant had won some fame by writing the words of Yale's latest song: "Hail to the Blue." Mumford was one of the swellest dressers in the college, in a way an arbiter of fashion.

While they were talking, Newt Baxby passed, in his new touring car. Beside him, on the front seat, was Kate Douglass. In the tonneau sat Malcolm and Miss Davis. Boltwood was glad that they did not see him, but the sight of the girl on the front seat, talking pleasantly with Baxby as the latter piloted the car down the street, gave him a most disagreeable sensation. Hot and cold flashes ran over him, and he stared so hard that both Bryant and Mumford turned to see what he was looking at.

"Hello, hello!" said Chat. "Old Gotrocks Baxby is out in his new juggernaut."

"And it's a question whether he should be in the jug or not," said Bryant, perpetrating the first pun of his life.

"Oh, Cully, Cully!" said Mumford. "That's

some sample of the class of wit which the late Sydney Smith condemned, save in its rarest forms. By Jove! it's a corker. I'll have to tell everybody about that one, Cully. Excuse me while I chortle. Really and truly, I can't believe you said it."

In spite of the unpleasant twinges, Roger was also compelled to laugh. "Wasn't that our new twirling wonder on the back seat?" asked Mumford. "And wasn't it his stunning sister beside Baxby?"

"Sure," said Bryant. "Rumor hath it that Baxby has been making tracks out to the residence where Miss Douglass is. She's really some queen, and I'm thinking of writing a sonnet to her eyebrow."

"Yep," said Chat, "I've heard about that. The sudden friendliness between Douglass and Baxby perforce aroused airy comment. Confound it! Cully, I'm falling into your style of flowery speech. This association with a real poet gets a man talking like an edition de luxe of Lord Byron. Men, and manners, and motives are worthy of analytical consideration. If Douglass's sister has the art and looks to ensnare Baxby, perhaps Baxby will loan Malcolm enough to pay some of his debts. At any rate, I hope so about forty plunks' worth.

I would not mention it publicly had I not mentioned it privately some four hundred times to Malcolm himself without any apparent effort on his part to reduce the aforesaid liability. Excuse me,"

"I think I'll have to break away," said Roger, who was in no mood for this sort of chatter. In a bad frame of mind, he left them. "Oh," he growled to himself, tramping across to the oval, "I suppose Andy's right; Douglass is a thorough bounder, and she's his sister. I've got an awful bad taste in my mouth!"

CHAPTER XIX

IN THE CLUTCH OF SUSPICION

EARLY on Thursday, Boltwood made a surprising discovery; he found himself using his right hand and arm in a natural manner, without giving a thought to the lameness that had so upset him. When he realized this, he stopped short and began feeling of his shoulder, seeking, with thumb and fingers for the spot which had, a short time before, felt as tender as a boil when he pressed upon it. He was compelled to spend several minutes in the search, and even when he found it, to his surprise, firm, steady pressure did not cause him to cringe. It was still sore, but many a time, especially after a hard football game, a dozen spots on his body had been far more painful.

“Everlasting wonders!” he muttered, scarcely daring entertain the eager hope which sought to struggle up within him. “Can it be that the old thing is really better? And after I gave it another snap when I threw that paper weight? Is it possible—”

He paused, his lips parted, his eyes bright, a smile spreading slowly over his face. Why, such a thing would be in the nature of a miracle! It might enable him to get back into the game this very season! It might give him the opportunity to pitch in at least one of those great contests against Harvard!

He did not straightway rush forth to tell any one. On the contrary, not wishing to arouse fictitious hopes in others as well as in himself, he remained silent, resolved to try out his arm cautiously and in private. Not until he was convinced, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that his chances of pitching again were three to one, would he take the coach, Stote, or any other person into his confidence. But he was cheerful again—so cheerful that Dowling and one or two others wondered at it.

Late in the forenoon, returning from a lecture, Roger ran up to the room of Chock Furbush. Furbush happened to be in, and they spent ten minutes or more talking over things of mutual interest. From there he went on to speak to Malcolm Douglass. The door was a bit ajar, the catch not having taken hold, although it did not stand on a crack. Suddenly Roger stopped short, wondering at a sound which had seemed to come

to his ears from within that room. It was like a person sobbing. Moreover, the sobs did not sound at all masculine.

Involuntarily holding his breath, Boltwood heard some one speaking in a low, harsh tone that seemed vibrant with anger. That this was Douglass himself he entertained no question. "You'll do what I tell you to do," said the wrathful voice. "You've simply got to, that's all there is to it!"

Then came the voice of the other, a bit husky and choked, stirring the man outside the door in every fiber: "Oh, Malcolm!"

Instantly Roger walked on. Down the stairs he went swiftly and lightly, his pulses pounding.

"It's none of my business," he tried to tell himself. "I suppose it's just a brother-and-sister affair. But what was she doing here at this hour? Who came with her? What the deuce was it he was telling her she must do?"

His mind riotous with speculation, he reached the open air. In spite of his attempts to explain the matter as a brother-and-sister affair, there had been something so threatening, so domineering and brutal, in Malcolm's angry voice, that Roger felt a great yearning to lay hands on the man. "A thorough thrashing would do that fellow good, I believe," he thought.

A classmate coming in gave him an excuse to linger and chat a few minutes on the adjoining steps. The other man had gone whistling and bounding up the stairs, and Roger still lingered, when Kate Douglass came out—alone! The fact that she was unaccompanied worried the junior. A rule had been broken, and Roger believed this had been done at the insistence of Douglass himself, who doubtless had made the appointment with his sister in his room. To expose her to the comment and criticism this might arouse was an action that made Boltwood long to tell the fellow what he thought of him.

Her gaze cast downward, Kate Douglass hurried away. Apparently she did not see the man on the steps near by; but Roger had caught a glimpse of her face, and he felt certain that it was flushed from weeping. Wrath boiled up within him. It carried him back to the door of Douglass' room and he went in. The latch clicked behind him.

Douglass, bending over a desk beside one of the windows, started at that click as if it had been a pistol shot. His head jerked round, and he stared over his shoulder. His face was white, his eyes wide open. One instant he remained like a person turned to stone, and then, almost in a panic, he

thrust something into a little drawer of the desk, and closed the drawer. He turned on the unwelcome intruder, his lips drawn back from his fine, white teeth.

"What the devil do you mean by coming in without an invitation?" he demanded, his voice husky and unsteady.

Instantly Boltwood decided to dissemble. What he had seen led him to choose this course. "Just calling on Furbush," he said quietly, "and I thought I'd see if you were in. Didn't know but I might be able to give you a special hint that would aid you in catching on to that fadeaway ball."

"To the deuce with the fadeaway! What do I want of that? I don't need it. I've got enough kinks in my own repertoire, which I fancy I fully demonstrated Tuesday. I never really did need any suggestions, or advice, or coaching from you. And before you come into my room, knock; keep that in mind hereafter."

Never in his life had Roger Boltwood felt a keener desire to strike a man. He fairly tingled with it.

Paying no heed to anything further Malcolm said, he left the fellow. Straight to his own room he went. There, alone, he paced the floor, a

strangely grim and troubled expression on his face.

He was not thinking of what had been said. The insolence was forgotten. He was thinking of the man's startled manner, his white face, his fear-betraying eyes, when he suddenly realized that he was not alone in the room. He was thinking of the husky unsteadiness in his voice when he first tried to speak, after having slipped something into the desk drawer. More than that, he was thinking of the glimpse he had caught of that object which Malcolm had so hastily and agitatedly concealed. It had sparkled and glinted. It had given out a greenish flash. Nevertheless, despise the man as he might, Boltwood struggled against the suspicion that had fastened upon him with claws of steel. He did not wish to believe Malcolm Douglass a thief.

CHAPTER XX

DEEPENING SHADOWS

ROGER did not go out to the field that afternoon. Instead, choosing his time, he strolled round to the gymnasium, and was much gratified to find an opportunity to slip into the deserted baseball cage without attracting attention. He had brought a ball with him, and there, quite alone, he peeled off his coat and prepared to make an experiment. He did this with a certain amount of reluctance and dread, which mingled strangely with the eagerness that had forced him to come there.

When he was ready, standing at one end of the cage with the ball in his hand, he again felt, cautiously at first, for the lame spot in his shoulder. It was there, but it had given him so little trouble that, since morning, he had thought of it only occasionally. He pinched it hard, moving his arm into various positions, and felt not a single one of those keen, cutting twinges such treatment would have given him a day or two ago.

"I just know it's better," he muttered; "and

now I'm bound to see if I can throw this ball. I'm going to make the test, but I'll be careful."

He was cautious, and put as little strain as possible upon his shoulder with that first gentle throw. The effort gave him no very unpleasant feeling in his shoulder, and, little by little, he let his arm out, although not once did he put anything like steam into the throwing. His blood was leaping in his veins, for he found that he could swing his arm as he pleased, and gently cast the ball the length of the cage, apparently without any harm to his shoulder.

"I'm coming back!" He laughed softly. "By Jove! I'm coming back. I don't know what happened when I threw that paper weight, but I believe something snapped into place again. I'll get out of here before any one sees me and asks questions."

Putting on his coat, he slipped out, surreptitiously, as he had entered. After this, even, he concluded to persist in his course of silence. He could not be absolutely sure that his shoulder would recuperate sufficiently soon to enable him to do any hard and difficult pitching the present season, although he entertained the most cheerful hopes. As far as possible, he would try to work it back into shape without attracting attention to

what he was doing. Then if the time came that he was greatly needed, he would do whatever lay in his power for the varsity nine.

A short time later, he met Miss Kate Douglass on Chapel Street. She came out of a little shop near the corner of Church, and he was forced to stop in his tracks to avoid a collision. The color in her cheeks deepened a bit as she recognized him.

"Oh, how do you do, Mr. Boltwood?" she said, with a faint smile, as he bowed, hat in hand. "I didn't expect to see you here. I thought you would be out at the field with the team."

"I didn't seem to be needed, Miss Douglass, as my lame shoulder has prevented me from doing any real practice work!"

"How is your shoulder? Is it really true that you've hurt it so you never can pitch any more? It's a shame! I think it's a shame, even though my brother says he'd never have had a chance if you hadn't been injured."

"In which belief he certainly is wholly mistaken. The nine needed pitchers. Even when I was in shape, a man with the ability of your brother would have had his chance, just the same."

"Malcolm gets such ideas into his head sometimes. He's terribly set and prejudiced."

"You're making quite a stay in New Haven, Miss Douglass," he said, changing the subject.

"Oh, yes; but it's practically over. We leave to-morrow."

"I'm sorry."

She flashed him a look, which he returned with sober sincerity. It was remarkable how she could affect him with only a glance from those blue eyes.

"It's very nice of you to say that, Mr. Boltwood. I'll be equally frank. I'm sorry that you and my brother are not on more friendly terms, so that we might have seen more of you at Mr. Deerings'. Mrs. Herkimer has spoken of you several times. She's rather peculiar, you know, and she takes the most pronounced likes and dislikes. I have often wondered how it happened to be the former in my case."

Roger replied promptly. "No one save yourself could possibly wonder at that, Miss Douglass."

Again the blush swept over her face. "Like most college men I've met, you're fearfully prompt with flattery," she reproved him.

And now he ventured to banish the smile, but the moment he did so, he began to stammer:

"Flattery, Miss Douglass, was the farthest thing from my mind." He longed to say even

more of the same or deeper significance, but his tongue threatened to tie itself in a knot. "Has Mrs. Herkimer recovered her earring?" he asked hastily.

Instantly he regretted the question. Her smile vanished; her color fled like a thing frightened. Again she flashed him a look, and then her eyes dropped. "No," she replied, after a brief hesitation, "she has not recovered it. I'm afraid she never will." Her gloved fingers, interlocked nervously, seemed to take a tighter grip; and then, somewhat hastily, she asked: "Do you really think my brother will succeed as a pitcher? Do you think it was an accident that he came through the Georgetown game so well?"

"There seemed to be nothing like luck about that performance," said Roger quietly. "If he keeps up to the standard he set himself then, I know of no reason why he shouldn't be classed as one of Yale's best pitchers."

"I'm glad to hear you say that. Knowing his temperament, his impulsiveness, his failings, I've scarcely dared feel completely assured. Henceforth I will not worry so much over that."

A few moments later, she bade him good-by, hesitating a bit and then holding out her hand, which he took with a thrill, and told her, with all

sincerity, that he hoped to see her again some time.

That same evening Boltwood had another disagreeable shock. It was raining, but he had gone out for a constitutional, as he found it impossible to study. Suddenly he was brought to himself by the sight of a man hastily coming out of a little pawnshop.

Boltwood knew the shop. It was kept by an aged Shylock, who thrived not a little on the extreme and pressing necessities of college men. Few who patronized that place ever had a good word for its proprietor; some even called him a "fence," and expressed a belief that his customers were sometimes persons who had obtained by unlawful means the valuables they pledged.

Although, like himself, the man coming out of the shop wore a long coat and a slouch hat, Boltwood recognized him instantly as Malcolm Douglass. It chanced that Roger was in a shadow undispelled by the nearest street light. He stopped instantly, watching his classmate hurry away after casting one hasty glance around. Then out of the darkness of a near-by doorway stepped a girl, who quickly crossed the street, overtook Douglass at a corner, spoke to him, and disappeared round that corner at his side. That it was Malcolm's



Under the light behind the counter the old hook-nosed hawk of a proprietor was gloating over something in his hand.

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sister the watching man knew positively. "Great Scott!" he muttered, with dry lips. "He's been forced to hock something with that old robber. She came with him, and waited outside while he made the transaction."

Then another thought, a terrible suspicion, gripped him by the throat, and he opened the door of the pawnshop.

Under the light behind the counter the old hook-nosed hawk of a proprietor was gloating over something in his hand. Whether or not he heard the student enter, his clawlike fingers suddenly closed over the object at which he had been gazing, and he glanced up.

Boltwood brought forth his watch. "How much will you let me have on this?" he asked, his voice husky and unsteady.

Having first deposited in a drawer whatever his closed hand hid, the old man took the time-piece and made a careful inspection of it.

"I'll let you haf ten dollars," he said. "That's more than—"

Roger reached quickly across the counter and took the watch away. "Ten dollars!" he exclaimed disdainfully. "You've got another guess coming. That watch cost eighty."

"My poy, they always peat you, dose cheweler

sharks. It's a purty good vatch, maybe worth thirty dollars even it was new. It is too much, but I will let you have fifteen—"

"You won't!" said Roger, snapping it back on the chain and dropping it into his pocket. "I'll do no business with a pirate like you."

The old man called after him as he was departing, but he gave no heed. Outside, upon the street, he paused and drew a long breath, pushing back his hat to wipe the perspiration from his forehead.

"Good Lord!" he muttered hoarsely. "It was Mrs. Herkimer's earring!"

CHAPTER XXI

TORTURING DOUBT

THE fine mist had turned to a light, dripping rain. Through this drizzle, Roger stumbled along the street, his mind in a tumult. It seemed certain that Malcolm Douglass, driven desperate by the financial straits into which he had plunged through his own foolish and reckless style of living, had succumbed to temptation, and committed a crime. Had Douglass been the only one involved by this action, Roger Boltwood would not have been so deeply affected; what had shaken him like a blow was the conviction that sister was concerned in the affair.

"It's simply awful—unbelievable!" he muttered hoarsely, giving his head a jerk to shake the rain, dripping, from his hat brim.

He thought of the dark gossip concerning the Douglass family which Dowling had learned from Erwin, a freshman. According to Erwin, there was a bad strain in the Douglass blood, a crooked streak in the family, which cropped out, under stress of circumstances, in its various members.

Roger, thinking of Malcolm's sister, with her lovely face and her honest blue eyes, felt his whole soul revolt against this seemingly inexorable decree of nature. He told himself it could not be. He must be mistaken; circumstances of which he had barely glimpsed the surface had forced upon him a false and repugnant impression.

Striving thus for something that would lead him to the welcome belief that he was wrong in his suspicions, he recalled, with sickening clearness, how, earlier on this same day, he had inadvertently overheard the threatening words of Malcolm addressed to his sister in the privacy of his own room. She had been weeping, while the fellow savagely and brutally told her that she must do something at his command. And now together, on this dismal night, when there was little chance of any one's being abroad to see and recognize them, they had come to the pawnshop of a notorious and unscrupulous old wretch, who was suspected of dealings with crooks; and there Malcolm Douglass had pledged the costly earring of Mrs. Herkimer. All this seemed to point to one conclusion: For some days the earring had been in the possession of Kate Douglass, a fact known to her brother, and eventually he had compelled her to hand it over to him, in order that he

might raise cash to pay some of his miserable debts.

Up and down his study he paced, like the caged tiger whose restlessness under confinement has provided a much overworked simile. In doubt and torment of soul, he sought to arrive at a satisfactory decision regarding the course he should follow. Except for the thought of Kate Douglass, he was sure that he would put the police on the track of Mrs. Herkimer's missing earring. He even contemplated going to Douglass at once, accusing the man boldly, and forcing him into a corner. To do this, however, he would have to tell what he had seen. He would have to let Malcolm know that he believed his sister to be an accomplice in the theft. This was something he could not do.

After a time his mind began working in another direction. Neither in the room of Douglass, when Malcolm had so hastily concealed the glittering thing he held, nor in the pawnshop, when the old money lender had quickly closed his claw-like fingers over it, had Roger obtained a fair, full, and satisfying look at the object. And now, with a sudden feeling of exultation, he told himself that, after all, he might be mistaken. Perhaps it was not Mrs. Herkimer's lost earring.

And, if it were not, he could make no greater blunder than to notify the police or accuse Malcolm Douglass. If he were to be placed under oath, he could not swear that he had seen the earring in the possession of either Douglass or the pawnbroker.

"I may be dreadfully mistaken, after all," he decided hopefully. "I hope to Heaven I am!"

Andy came in and found him still pacing the floor, traces of the troubled look on his face. "Oh, forget it!" said Dowling. "Stop worrying over that arm of yours."

Almost fiercely Roger blazed back at him: "To thunder with my arm! Who's worrying about it?"

Like one whose breath has been knocked out of him, Andy sat down on a chair and stared at his roommate.

CHAPTER XXII

THINGS THAT HARASS

AS they hustled into their clothes, to make a rush for chapel in the morning, Andy remarked: "You were playing baseball or football all night long, or else you were knocking the everlasting packing out of somebody. I'm inclined to think you participated in about a dozen good, stiff fist fights."

"Don't remember," said Roger shortly. "Sometimes I dream, not often."

The rain had ceased with the passing of the night. The morning was sunny and delightful, with the freshness and sweet odors of May. Birds were singing in the trees. It was the full spring-time of the year and of youth, but the throb and thrill of it somehow failed to fill Roger's veins with that elation which the day, the season, his abounding energy, and his own stage of life should have brought. It was so remarkable to see him wearing a sober and almost gloomy face that Andy wondered, although he held his tongue.

Again Roger turned his thoughts to his injured

arm, and again, while the team was practicing out at the field, he slipped surreptitiously into the cage, taking a baseball with him. Once more he tested his arm, and found it stronger and better, with scarcely a lingering touch of the lameness that had followed the injury. It was so marvelous, so almost unbelievable, that he was afraid to permit himself to feel too much satisfaction. Nevertheless, that day he pitched several times, using nearly as much speed as he would have used in a game. When it was all over, his arm actually seemed better, as if it had been given the exercise it really needed.

On Saturday the team was to play in Providence, one of its few remaining games away from home. Roger did not go, for there seemed to be no reason why he should do so. Left behind, he gave his arm further and still harder exercise, even venturing to throw a few curves.

The day was unseasonably warm. Around the college it seemed strangely lonely. He fancied he knew the cause of it: he was here in New Haven, while the varsity was playing in Providence.

In an endeavor to get away from this feeling, he went tramping out through the baking streets of the town, and, to his surprise, the sensation pursued him. Never before had New Haven

seemed so oddly dismal and cheerless. The streets were filled with the usual Saturday crowds, and things were moving briskly, but Boltwood could not shake that feeling of depression. Presently the explanation came to him. "She" was gone.

"You fool!" he almost sparled at himself. "You saphead! I'd be mortally ashamed to have any one know what a drooling calf you are!"

It was nearly six o'clock when he encountered Handy Jones. "Heard from the game, haven't you?" asked Handy.

"Why, no," answered Roger, "I haven't. Somehow, I—it slipped my mind. What's the news?"

"We won."

"Good!"

"But it wasn't any cinch, evidently—eleven innings. We broke the tie in the eleventh, and pulled out two runs ahead."

"Who pitched?"

"Pascal went nine innings. After they tied up, Douglass went in. What do you think of that, Boltwood? Douglass practically gets the credit of winning this game, too. Pretty fine for him, eh?"

"Rather," answered Roger shortly.

"But, anyhow, we won. Going down to the train to meet the team when it comes in?"

"I don't know," was the vague reply.

"Oh, you'd better," urged Jones. "There'll be the usual bunch on hand. I wouldn't miss it for a farm in Ohio. I wanted to go along with the team, but, of course, that was out of the question. Sort of thought perhaps you would."

"I had other things to do."

"Oh, well, come on down, and let's give the conquerors a royal welcome on their return."

"Perhaps I will," said Roger, turning away.

Jones stood watching him. "It's a miserable shame," said Handy; "but hanged if I thought he'd show it, even if he took it so hard. He's always seemed to have the sporting blood that gives a fellow a stiff upper lip."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE BLOW-UP

ANDY DOWLING found Roger in half negligee. "Didn't see you with the bunch that greeted the returning conquerors," he said.

Roger yawned and stretched. "Nope; been diverting myself at billiards. Haven't played in a dog's age, and found I was a bit rusty at it."

"If I'd had a double-length tape measure," said Dowling, spinning his hat at the couch, and flinging himself down on a chair, "I'd tried to take the dimensions of Douglass's chest. He's the candy kid to-night, and, really, the way he hates himself is sad beyond words."

Roger quickly smoothed out the slight frown which puckered his forehead at the mention of Douglass. "He seems to have good reasons for feeling a trifle haughty," he replied indifferently.

"If he doesn't blow up and scatter himself all over the surrounding scenery, I'll acknowledge myself no prophet," returned Dowling. "By the way," he added, as if struck by another thought,

"I had a little chat with Erwin this afternoon. You remember Erwin, the freshman I told you about, who knows so much relating to the Douglass family history?"

"Yes, I remember about that."

"Well, what do you think? Erwin's heard something new. It seems that there was some sort of a mistake about Malcolm's brother being concerned in that cement fraud out West. He was suspected, accused, and fired; then he got busy on his own hook investigating the crooked affair, and succeeded in nailing it on to other parties—proved that he was absolutely innocent. They were putting the thing across without his knowledge."

"Well, I'm glad to hear that!" exclaimed Roger, showing so much gratification that Dowling gave him a queer look. "I'm glad to know the Douglasses aren't as bad as they're painted."

"You do seem highly pleased," said Andy. "Hadn't you better offer Malcolm congratulations?" he added, with sarcasm.

Boltwood made no reply to this, although he flushed hotly, and restrained the words which leaped to his lips by getting a prompt grip upon himself.

Dowling little knew the full extent of his room-

mate's reasons for rejoicing over this report that there had been a blunder in accusing one of the Douglass family of dishonesty. The accusers had been mistaken; they had made their charges too hastily, and without sufficient evidence; doubtless they had been led to do so by a superficial appearance of guilt which seemed to point conclusively to the man they had suspected.

Thinking of his own suspicions concerning Malcolm, and how he had been tempted to arraign the man for the theft of Mrs. Herkimer's earring without himself being absolutely sure of his grounds, Roger was glad he had not acted with undue haste. And the more he considered the matter, stronger became the conviction that he had been deceived. Under no circumstances would Kate Douglass have permitted her brother to force her into acting as his accomplice in the perpetration of a felony. It seemed far more likely that Malcolm, in his dire need, had compelled her to hand over some valuable trinket of her own for him to pawn. This was the explanation; Boltwood began to feel sure of it. While it left Douglass still in an unenviable light, at least it relieved him of the stigma of theft.

During the next few days, Roger saw little of Malcolm Douglass save at training table, and,

once or twice, out at the field. Yet he fancied he observed something unusual in the man's manner, something indicative of secret worryment. At times, when surrounded by chattering companions, in whose more or less humorous talk he took part, or when working earnestly in practice, Malcolm seemed cheerful and almost high-spirited; but whenever left to himself an instant, he appeared to lose interest in the conversation of his associates; he grew thoughtful and moody, and a cloud crept over his face. He shook it off only with an effort.

"I fancy he's still worrying over his debts," Roger told himself.

One experience at getting back into the game too soon, and again hurting his arm, had made Boltwood wary; he did not mean to repeat the performance if he could help it. Therefore he continued working in secret, looking forward to the time when he could go, with all confidence and assurance, to Stote, and tell him he was ready to pitch once more.

On Wednesday, the Cornell nine came down from the Ithaca hills, and, on the track, the water, and the field, Cornell was always formidable. Roger had a seat in the stand, with Cullen Bryant beside him. He was talking to the poet when

Kilmer and Bernfield climbed to the seats at his right hand.

"Hello, you celebrated fraud," greeted Price, giving him a slap on the shoulder. "Here's old Roger, your latest victim."

"I refuse to speak to the scoundrel," said Bernfield. "He's as deceptive as Ulysses, and as clever as Satan. Why, look at him now, sitting here, ready to watch this game, and it wouldn't surprise me if he could go down there on the field and pitch better than any man we have. If any one thinks he's down, and tries to jump on him, he's liable to rise up and hand the mistaken dolt a knock-out punch."

Both seniors spoke pleasantly to Bryant, whose accomplishments had made him something of a college celebrity.

"What sayest thou about the game, Bolt?" questioned Kilmer. "Have we got the goods to deliver? Can we slaughter these invaders from the West?"

"I hope so," answered Roger noncommittally.

"Seems a bit doubtful," said Norry. "I understand they're likely to put our new flinger, Douglass, in against them at the word go."

"And if he can't hold them," observed Price, "I don't know who can. It's pretty tough when

old Eli has only one man to fall back on. Why don't you shake the kink out of that arm, Bolt, and get back into the game?"

"I'd like to."

The two teams came out for practice, and the Yale rooters began to tune up. The very air seemed to feel the throb of the coming clash. A signal was given, and a great chorus began singing "Hail to the Blue," throughout which Bryant sat like a man of stone, his face somewhat flushed.

The practice of the Cornell team was vigorous and snappy. Several pitchers warmed up for the visitors, but Yale felt certain that the Ithaca star, Ladlow, who had made trouble for the Elis the year before, would be the choice of the enemy. Douglass limbered his arm, with Stote doing the catching, and this advertised Yale's selection.

"He certainly is a well-built chap," commented Kilmer, watching Malcolm, "and he seems to have lots of steam."

"Steam is a good thing," said Bernfield; "but they tell me it wins few games, unless a man uses it with a change of pace and headwork in handling batters. It's headwork that makes a pitcher."

"Yes," agreed Roger, "and it's often the headwork of the catcher. Most people seem to think the catcher is stuck up behind the bat to receive

the balls and throw them back to the pitcher, but a brainy, quick-thinking backstop is one of the most valuable men on any team. The best catchers seldom get half the credit they deserve."

"Oh, I see how it was," said Bernfield, giving Kilmer a nudge; "it was old Stotey who really deserved the credit for your cleverness before before you broke your arm. It was Stote, not you, who struck out so many fancy hitters."

"Well, now," returned Roger, "you're pretty near right, at that. Lots of times it was Stote's judgment, not mine, that fooled a clever batter." And he meant it.

"Then, perhaps, this new man, Douglass, doesn't deserve so much credit and applause," said Kilmer. "But isn't it rather odd that, with twenty other ambitious would-be-pitchers, Douglass is the only man who has shown any symptoms of being able to fill the gap you left behind you? Other chaps in that bunch have speed and curves and control."

"You should say they have speed or curves or control; none of them possesses the combination. There's where the trouble lies. One man has speed, but no curves; another has curves and speed both, perhaps, but no control. Douglass appeared to possess all three, and where his weak-

ness lies, if he has one, has not yet become apparent. Let us hope it never will."

"I hope so," Kilmer promptly returned; "but somehow I've got a hunch—a disagreeable hunch, that there's trouble in store for him to-day. Cornell has a fast team, and plenty of good stickers; their work against other nines this year has made that fact plain."

Somehow, Roger himself was troubled by apprehension of the same sort, although he did not say so. When the game opened, and ran for three innings, with Douglass going strong, and Yale securing the only tally, he began to believe that his forebodings had been needless.

"The fellow looks better than ever," said Bernfield. "He certainly is sticking a lot of stuff on the ball to-day."

Ladlow likewise was pitching a fine game, and, with two teams apparently so closely matched, a single tally in the early innings was no margin of safety.

It was in the first part of the fourth that Roger, watching every move, and letting nothing escape him, fancied he detected the first symptoms of trouble. With a dangerous Cornell man poisoning the ash, Stote signaled, and Douglass shook his head. The Yale captain repeated the signal, and

the pitcher persisted in calling for something else. Reluctantly, Stote made a different sign, which was acceptable to the mound man.

The batter hit the ball, but, fortunately for Yale, he drove it whistling on a line into the waiting hands of Hippy Carver. "An outcurve," muttered Roger; "an outcurve for Perkins! Why, he can hit 'em every time if his bat is long enough to reach. Stote knew it, but Douglass insisted on pitching that ball."

As if he had foreseen precisely what would occur, Douglass nodded his satisfaction over the result. And when Cornell failed to get a runner to second in that inning, Malcolm walked to the bench with a symptom of swaggering.

The last part of the fourth inning was both lucky and unlucky for the home team. Yale found Ladlow sufficiently well to secure one run, aided by a costly error on Cornell's part. With only one down, and runners on second and third, it looked as if the Elis would obtain a comforting lead; but a well-executed double play nipped their hopes.

Then came the fatal fifth. A bobble by Inman permitted Cornell's first runner to reach the initial sack. Plainly this poor work on Inman's part annoyed Douglass a little, and, in trying to

strike out the next hitter, Malcolm issued a pass. Then the third batsman dropped a bunt that advanced both runners, while he was being thrown out at first.

Again Douglass declined to follow Stote's first signal. Though the Yale captain straightened up behind the plate, and stood gazing at him through the wire meshes of his mask, Malcolm persisted in demanding his own way. He got it at last, and the batsman slammed out a two-bagger, which gave Cornell a brace of tallies.

Again Roger muttered under his breath. "The conceited, bull-headed chump!" he growled. "If he'd forgotten that he had a head on his shoulders, and followed Stote's signals, I doubt if they'd have made those runs. It's his enormous egotism that's going to trip him up. There lies his weakness."

"What are you mumbling about?" questioned Kilmer. "That was certainly unlucky. I feel like making the air blue myself."

"Luck had little or nothing to do with it," retorted Roger. "Sheer pig-headed obstinacy handed Cornell those tallies. I wish I'd come out with the team. I'd like to be down there now."

"But what could you do? If Stote can't handle Douglass, do you have an idea that you can?"

Price had failed to grasp Boltwood's meaning; believing his arm had come back sufficiently to enable him to pitch a few innings, Roger was sorry he had not come out with the nine so that he might play.

A dark flush rested like a shadow on the face of Malcolm Douglass. At Stote's request, he came forward and listened to the captain's few low-spoken words, but his manner of listening denoted sullen anger. "Well," breathed the watchful Boltwood, "if that hasn't taught him his lesson, he'll never learn one."

Whether or not Malcolm had learned a lesson, his slab work suddenly lost its effectiveness. Perhaps this was because, encouraged by their success, the visitors struck a batting streak. At any rate, whip them over as he would, with speed and sharp shoots, the Ithaca men seemed able to make connections whenever the sphere cut the pan, and before this fateful spasm was checked, they had gathered a lead of five big runs.

"And that's the game," said Price Kilmer sorrowfully. "Our new wonder has exploded with a tremendous, far-echoing report."

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SPARK OF HOPE

KILMER was right; not once during the remaining innings did Yale seriously menace Cornell. Stote wisely refrained from sending out either Pascal or Regan to take Douglass's place. His judgment told him to save them up for Saturday's game, and led him to call Colby Rackliffe, one of the third-raters, to fill the vacancy made by the retirement of Malcolm. Rackliffe had smoke enough, and some curves; but he was wilder than a hunted hawk, and the numerous passes he issued were productive of three more runs for the visitors, though he was not hit hard when he did get the ball across. Toward the end of the game, Ladlow either weakened a little, or eased up, and Yale managed to squeeze in three more tallies, which nevertheless, left the game nicely bagged by the invaders.

That night at dinner, Malcolm was sullen. There was, indeed, little of the usual chatter and joshing in which the players frequently indulged; for they realized that if they were not in the class

with Cornell, there was only the slimmest prospect of making a good showing against Harvard. Once more the future looked dark and discouraging for the varsity.

Boltwood followed Stote when the captain left. It was Roger's purpose to let Art into his secret; he meant to convey to the man the knowledge that he had hopes of coming back with his arm in shape to pitch at least one of the Harvard games, no matter how grilling and hard fought it might be.

Art was on his way to Scroll and Keys, of which he was a member. Together they turned into College Street, walking slowly. Roger was seeking words in which to broach the subject on his mind, when suddenly Stote began speaking in a low, almost bitter tone:

"It's tough, with such a body of men as we have here, that we can't dig up half a dozen fairly good pitchers. If we had a string of promising medium-grade twirlers, we might pick one or two out of the lot who'd be able to surprise John Harvard. There are plenty of fellows ready and eager to do their best, but I'm hanged if I've spotted one of them who gives me an atom of real confidence. We lost our mainstay and only hope when we lost you, Bolt."

"Oh, now, cheer up," returned Roger. "Perhaps you haven't lost me. You know I've been giving my wing a pretty nice old rest."

"Because you had to. I know. On my word, I was beginning to believe Douglass stood a chance of turning the trick for us, but, after to-day, though it's no unusual thing for the best of pitchers to have a slump, my confidence is knocking at the bottom of the thermometer. The fellow is temperamentally unfitted. When he's in the right mood, he's a world beater; when he's wrong, he couldn't beat a carpet."

"I know he refused to take your signals," said Boltwood. "Dowling said that very thing would happen. He prophesied it, and I've prayed that his prophecy shouldn't come true. But I'm really serious, old man, in saying that I actually hope to be able to pitch again—and that soon."

They had stopped in front of Chi Phi House. Across the way, a few steps farther on, loomed the ivy-covered walls of Keys. Stote placed his hand almost fondly on Roger's arm. "Don't you think it, Bolt," he said, shaking his head; "you can't pitch again this year—perhaps you never will. I've got it straight, you couldn't go through one hard inning with that arm. I haven't said as much before to anybody."

Boltwood was silent; seeing this, and misinterpreting it, the Yale captain hastily sought to cheer him up: "Now don't take it to heart; it's not your fault. You've done your best for the varsity and for Yale, and I don't believe you're going to find yourself forgotten. I've a notion that great honors are coming to you—very soon."

He said no more, but, gripping Roger's hand hard, turned and crossed toward the senior-society house on the other side of the street. Boltwood walked on, thinking of Stote's final words. What did he mean by them? Was it possible that he already knew that Roger would be accepted by Scroll and Keys?

Asking himself this question, Boltwood suddenly realized that tucked away in a hidden corner of his heart lay a secret hope, faint, perhaps, but existing, nevertheless, that he would be one of the fortunates chosen by Skull and Bones. Despite his open revolt against the society system, with its mystery, its mummary, and its fetish worship, he had never ceased to hold due respect for the one society that plainly sought to honor the men believed to be most deserving, regardless of their poverty, wealth, social standing, or the sturdiness and superiority of their family trees. He had confessed this to no one—not even to

Andy, not even to himself, until now. Yet hope had burned like a spark smoldering in ashes; past disappointments had not quenched it; it still glowed, tiny, but strong. However, should it at last be blotted out and extinguished on that fateful Thursday to come, no man should know its perishing caused him as much as a qualm; he would take his medicine like a man, and be grateful that at least he had been permitted to live the life of a student at Yale.

When the following Saturday came round, many students were surprised to see Boltwood appear again on the field in a playing suit. It had been believed almost universally that he had given up for the season. Baxby, sitting with Fenwick, and others of his clique, sneered openly and loudly.

"What's the sense of his trying to keep up the bluff?" said Newt. "He isn't fooling anybody. We all know he's done for."

Roger had come out with the intention of going into that game if he should be needed greatly, but the opposing team was Rutgers, and not especially strong, so Regan, though hit rather freely at times, was able to go through the entire contest, with Yale piling up enough runs to acquire and hold a safe lead. This gave Roger a touch

of disappointment, for he had really begun to long to face the test.

Back at the gymnasium, he took his shower with the others, and dallied somewhat while dressing. Carver and Inman likewise lingered, chatting with Roger, but presently, calling him a slow coach, they followed their teammates, who had departed. Boltwood fancied he was the last man of the nine left in the gymnasium, until Douglass, wearing a sweater and carrying his coat on his arm, came hurrying through the room. If he saw Roger, he did not betray the fact. And he did not pause a moment. At the door he dropped something which seemed to slip unobserved from his coat, and Roger's lips parted to call him back.

"No, let him go," he decided quickly. "I should worry about him and his possessions!"

As he was also leaving, however, he saw that the article dropped by Malcolm was a bill fold, which lay partly open on the floor. Obeying an unbidden impulse, he gave it a light kick. An oblong strip of thin, yellow cardboard fell out.

"But no money," said Boltwood. "I suppose it would be simple decency to return his property. It's possible some one else might be tempted to keep it." He picked up the bill fold and the strip of cardboard.

Suddenly he stiffened a little and stood in his tracks, staring at the latter article. "Great Scott!" he muttered hoarsely. "Here it is! This is the pawn ticket, and it calls for an emerald earring set with diamonds!"

CHAPTER XXV

IN THE INTERIM

FOR several minutes, Boltwood stood looking at the evidence of Douglass' guilt. His face grew grim and ominous, and his lips were pressed tightly together. So the man was a thief, after all! He was a thief, and his sister—

“I won't believe it; I can't believe it!” said Roger. “Whatever that man has done, she had no hand in his crookedness.”

Nevertheless, even as he told himself this, doubt sickened him. Suddenly, lest some one should appear abruptly and see him, he put the bill fold into his pocket. The pawn ticket he stowed away in another pocket.

Leaving the gym, he turned the corner into York Street, and set forth for a brisk walk which carried him past the old cemetery. He desired time to think calmly in order to decide on the proper course to follow, and he was particularly glad that he met no friends or acquaintances.

That walk was far longer than Roger had con-

templated making it at first, but even when he turned about, even when he found himself in the vicinity of the Oval, he had reached no definite decision. Only one thing did he know for a certainty: he dreaded to face Douglass at the training table, and the dinner hour had come.

Only a few students were around the dormitory; most of them were out at their various eating places. Roger ascended to his room, where he paced the floor for a little while, still thinking, still wrestling with the problem that had been thrust upon him. At last, looking at his watch, he decided to go over to ten-eighty-one.

As he came out upon his own steps he saw Malcolm Douglass hurriedly disappear into the dormitory by the adjoining entrance, and knew that the man was on his way to his room. "Now's the time," muttered Boltwood grimly. "Perhaps Morrison won't be there." He followed Douglass.

The door of the man's room was not tightly closed. Before it Roger paused an instant, remembering its occupant's anger when he had entered without knocking on a previous occasion. He did not knock now; once more, unbidden, he opened the door and went in.

There was no one in the study but from the

adjoining bedroom, the door of which stood wide open, came sounds of a person moving hastily about. Advancing, Roger saw Malcolm in there. He was searching wildly, almost frantically, through one suit of clothes after another, which he snatched in turn from their hangers in the clothes press, flinging them on the bed when he failed to find what he was looking for. Roger could hear him muttering in agitation and dismay.

"I beg your pardon, Douglass," he said. "Have you lost something?"

The man whirled instantly and glared at the intruder. "What in thunder do you mean—"

"Now cut that out!" interrupted Roger sharply and grimly. "I asked if you'd lost something."

Douglass came out of the bedroom, and stopped a few feet from his classmate. "I've lost a bill fold containing four dollars in money," he replied.

Roger drew it forth and handed it over. With a little exclamation of relief, Malcolm snatched it from him. "Where did you find it?"

"You dropped it in the gym."

Douglass opened it hurriedly. The money was there—a two-dollar bill and two ones. In one of the pockets were some cards and slips of paper;

but, running these over hastily, the owner once more showed himself greatly disturbed.

His hands in his pockets, his head bent a little, Boltwood watched from beneath his eyebrows.

"It isn't here," muttered Malcolm at last. "Is this all you found?" he questioned suddenly.

"Did you lose something else?"

"Yes. Did you find something else?"

"Yes."

"Give it to me!" Douglass demanded.

"Wait a moment," said Roger, taking one hand out of his pocket and holding it up protestingly.

"What was it that you lost?"

Malcolm hesitated. "What difference does that make? Anything you found belongs to me. Hand it over!"

"You're ready to repeat that assertion under any circumstances, I presume; you're ready to claim anything I happened to find?"

Some of the color receded from Douglass's face. He moistened his lips with the tip of his tongue. "If it's mine I'm ready to claim it."

"But you just said it was yours. Now, in order to recover lost property, persons generally have to describe what they have lost. Would you mind describing the article that's still missing?"

Malcolm glared, and something like a quiver

ran over him from his head to his feet. His lips curled back from his teeth. "What in blazes are you trying to do, Boltwood? If you picked it up along with the bill fold, you know it's mine. If you're trying to get me into some sort of a trap, if you haven't really got anything—" he paused, lacking a word.

"I told you I had. I'll tell you more: It's a pawn ticket, but you'll never get it until you state what article the ticket will redeem."

Their eyes fought it out. Rage took possession of Douglass, and a purplish flush dispelled his pallor of a moment before. Presently, as if realizing that this burst of wrath had placed him at a disadvantage, Malcolm sought to get himself in hand. After a little silence, during which Roger waited patiently, he said, in a low tone: "The ticket called for an earring—an emerald set with diamonds."

"Yes," said Roger, "that's right; and that's the description of an earring lost by Mrs. Herkimer."

Once more Douglass blazed. "What do you mean? Do you dare insinuate that I—"

"Isn't it rather odd that you should pawn an earring, now? How did it come into your possession?"

"I'll answer no more questions," shouted Douglass suddenly. "Give me that ticket!"

"All this bluster and rage and persistence looks most significant to me," returned Boltwood, unruffled. "You can get the ticket back if you claim it after I've delivered it into the hands of the police. It seems to me that the police should have the privilege of taking a look at that earring. If it should prove to be the one lost by your sister's benefactress, Mrs. Herkimer, you'll find it up to you to do some explaining."

Roger more than half expected that Douglass would try to strike him then. Instead, he retreated a step and grasped the back of a chair, as if seeking support. Fear had taken the place of wrath in his eyes; fear apparently had robbed him in a great measure of his nerve and strength. For some seconds he stood clinging to the chair ere emitting the long breath which seemed to have filled and choked his lungs. When he spoke again his manner and his voice had changed; he was almost pleading.

"Don't do that, Boltwood. If you knew what it means, you wouldn't do it. I can explain everything. I *will* explain. That earring belongs to my sister. It's one of a pair left her by her mother. She lost the other one. I was hard up

—needed money—so I induced her to let me have the earring to pawn. That's all there is to it. Now, give me the ticket."

Roger handed it to him without a word, and turned on his heel.

CHAPTER XXVI

WHEN ROGUES FALL OUT

ROGER awoke to find his roommate in pajamas, his hair tousled, his countenance bewildered, shaking him vigorously.

"Wake up, you raving lunatic," ordered Andy. "You're getting worse and worse. You're getting so a man can't sleep in the same room with you nights. It's a wonder to me your bed-clothes aren't torn into ribbons. You thrashed and beat about all night, and a dozen times you shouted 'Fire!' I got up twice and went sniffing around clean out to the landing, thinking the old building must be burning."

"What time is it, Dowling?" asked Boltwood wearily. "It must be early. I'm tired as a beaten dog. Don't seem to have rested at all."

"Well, that's nothing strange. I'd let you alone if you hadn't been making such a fuss. It's a quarter to five," he answered, getting his watch from his clothes which hung over the back of a chair. "I knew you weren't resting; a man couldn't rest and play contortionist at the same

time. You look likè the last run of shad," he went on, gazing at the haggard man from the foot of the bed. "You're shot all to pieces. You're broken up worse than the wreck of the *Maine*, I tell you."

"You don't have to hand me that information I'm sure I feel worse than I look."

"Well, what were you doing last night? What's the matter with you?"

"Let mē think," said Roger, his forehead puckered. "The place where my brain should be seems a void."

"You sure had some sort of a fierce racket," persisted Andy accusingly. "What was your nightmare this time?"

"It was a whopper! I dreamed that Englewood Inn, out near Bethany, was struck by lightning. The house burned to the ground, but the rain saved the other buildings."

"Englewood Inn!" exclaimed Dowling. "What in Halifax were you doing out there?"

"Looking for Malcolm Douglass."

"Looking for— Hamlet's ghost! Look here, Bolt"—his roommate came round and sat down beside the bed—"you've been holding back on me; you wouldn't tell me just what happened between you and Douglass yesterday. Have you got

anything like a remote and vague idea that I might be a friend of yours?"

"I know you're my friend, Dowling."

"Well, then, why don't you play open with me? What are you covering up? What are you trying to conceal for the sake of that cheap skate?"

Boltwood lifted himself with a weary effort and sat up. "Sometimes when a man doesn't understand things himself he may, if he's discreet, hesitate about making talk that will possibly give others a false impression. I've made up my mind to get at the very bottom of a certain piece of business before talking it over with others."

Andy's further endeavors to pump gained him nothing. Roger again stretched himself in bed, and lay there a long time, thinking. Not until he had probed the hidden depths of the matter would he speak freely, even to his roommate; and it seemed likely that, even then, the truth would be so bitterly distasteful that he would refuse to discuss it.

Neither at chapel nor at breakfast that morning did he lay eyes on Douglass. The whereabouts of the man were still a mystery productive of gossip at training table. Some members of the team were of the opinion that Malcolm's continued absence could be explained only by the supposition

that he had been intensely mortified over his failure in the Cornell 'game; although this seemed scarcely satisfactory, considering his movements in the two or three days immediately following that contest. If any one fancied that Boltwood could clear up the matter, his grim bearing kept him from being directly interrogated. It remained a mystery.

Both Stote and the coach were angry; Douglass had not asked leave to absent himself, and to appease them he would have to make a thoroughly acceptable excuse.

After breakfast Roger went straight as his feet could take him to Douglass's room. Morrison was there, and he said that his roommate had not yet returned.

"Well, there's one man who certainly knows where he is," Boltwood thought, as he sought the rooms of Newton Baxby.

Pausing with his hand uplifted to knock, he heard the voices of two men who were quarreling in there. Their muffled tones were indistinct, but in a twinkling Roger concluded that one of them was Malcolm Douglass. After knocking and getting no response, he found the door unlocked, opened it, and stepped in.

One of the quarreling men was Baxby, but the

other was Claude Fenwick. In their excitement neither of them heard or saw Boltwood.

His face purple with wrath, Baxby was shaking his fist at Fenwick, who stood glaring at him with something like a contemptuous sneer on his lips. "You leech!" wheezed Baxby. "You blood-sucker! I've paid you well. Three times you've jacked me up, and I've been forced into raising the ante. Now you've not only quit on me, but you're trying blackmail. That's what it is, Fenwick—blackmail!"

"Call it anything you like, Newt," returned the other man; "you'll have to come across just the same. I need the dough, and that's not meant for a pun, either."

"I've paid your bills, every dollar of them, for the last year and a half. I've given you enough to carry any man through in first-class style, but you persisted in blowing your coin like a millionaire. You owe me more than you can ever repay, for you confessed that you'd have been forced to quit college, except for my generosity."

"Generosity!" Fenwick laughed, snapping his fingers. "You're got so much money you're reeking with it. You can smash motor cars, and buy new ones whenever you choose. And you talk about what I owe you! What do you owe me?"

You owe me your reputation as the famous Newby. I've written every word of that Newby stuff, and you've received the credit and glory. Why, you even bound me not to publish anything under my own signature, for fear that people would get wise. You haven't brains enough in your head to write anything more difficult than a check, yet you hope to make the staff of the *Lit* next year! You even hope to make a senior society, and, if you do, it will be through me and my talents, which you've bought cheaply with your money. Now come across with three hundred."

"I beg our pardon," said Roger. "I'm looking for Malcolm Douglass, and I thought perhaps Baxby could tell me where to find him."

"Good gracious!" gurgled Baxby. "When did you come in?"

"The fat's in the fire now!" muttered Fenwick, no less upset.

"Just a moment ago," said Boltwood, replying to Newton's question. "You were so interested in your little chat that perhaps you didn't hear me knock."

Baxby choked again, and mopped his perspiring face. Fenwick took a long breath and sat down on the broad arm of a chair.

"Douglass?" said Baxby at last. "I don't

know where he is. Perhaps you'll find him at the Taft; that's where he took his sister. I left them there last night."

"Thank you," said Roger, and left.

CHAPTER XXVII

IN THE CRUCIBLE

THE great week has come. Thursday was Tap Day. There was a suspense in the air keenly felt by the undergraduates. To most eyes the great pool seemed as smooth and unruffled as ever, but down beneath that placid surface great forces were astir. Wearing the cloak of invisibility, anxiety, fear, and hope pervaded dormitories and classrooms and stalked upon the campus. The junior class waited in suspense, no man able to say what joy or disappointment the coming Thursday would bring him. The great games with Harvard, Class Day, Commencement—time inexorable, unfaltering, swept on to those events, which must follow in rapid succession.

On that same Monday, Handy Jones sought Roger out. "You look like a can of mixed pickles," he said. "Have you heard the latest?"

"Latest what?"

"Campus gossip."

"My ears aren't hungry for gossip," said Roger.

"Mine are," admitted Handy cheerfully. "I'm ashamed of it, but sometimes I think I'm worse than an old maid. What I've lately heard leads me to remark that the mills of the gods still seem to be on the job, and they've ground our classmates, Baxby and Fenwick, exceeding small."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, those two cooing doves have had a falling out, it seems. They've quarreled over something and in his wrath Fenwick must have lost his head. You couldn't guess what he's done."

"Perhaps not. I won't try."

"He's slopped over. As the treacherous Delilah trimmed Samson of his strength by giving him a hair cut, so Fenwick has clipped away the glory of the great Newby."

"Ah!" breathed Roger, in sudden comprehension. "Go on."

"Everybody wondered that Baxby could write the Newby stuff, you know. Well, according to Fenwick, he didn't—not a word of it. Fenwick is blowing around that he wrote it all, and Baxby got the credit. It seems that Baxby paid Fenwick for this. Oh, say, but this means the ditching of Baxby's ambitions!"

"I don't think it will do Fenwick a great deal of good, either," said Roger. "He'd better have kept his mouth closed. He has said a lot more than will be good for him."

"I should so remark," agreed Handy. "That's why I said that he must have lost his noddle. Nobody is going to admire a fellow who'd enter into such an arrangement to barter his brains. I wonder why he didn't realize it? I wonder what made him blab?"

Roger believed he knew why Fenwick had made the blunder. Doubtless the man had fancied that Roger would tell of the quarrel in Baxby's room and its significance; and so, in a panic to save his face as far as possible, he had hastened to be the first to expose the secret of his alliance with Newt. This, doubtless, he had done without pausing to consider the light in which he himself would be placed.

"Both those fellows are dead uns," asserted Handy. "They might as well go jump off the dock. Old Baxby has been looking to be tapped on Thursday, I'm sure. Well, Fenwick has tapped him prematurely."

"And Fenwick—" mused Roger; "I wonder how he will enjoy the aftertaste of his mess of pottage!"

"I'll guarantee it will make him sick!" Jones chuckled.

Baxby indeed took the exposure hard. At first he attempted to explain, saying that he had permitted Fenwick merely to assist him a little by "touching up" some of his writings; but when confronted by Fenwick's statement that the latter had been the actual author of every line of the Newby stuff, Newt was forced to the wall, and he took refuge in sneers. As for Fenwick, he soon perceived that the part he had played was one to arouse open contempt, or silent scorn and aversion. Instead of being accepted as a genius forced by stress of poverty to do something bitterly distasteful, he quickly learned that honest, straightforward men were disposed to rate him as a very cheap fellow who had lent himself to the perpetrating of a fraud.

Wednesday came and brought Dartmouth. On his own insistence, Douglass was permitted to begin the game against the husky New Hampshire lads. Not only was Boltwood on the bench, but, to the surprise of many, he had warmed up a little before the game by pitching gently to a change catcher. Likewise he had talked earnestly with both Stote and the coach. Douglass took note of this.

Malcolm opened that game like a world beater, mowing down the first three men to face him, only one of whom succeeded even in fouling the ball. On his dark face as he walked to the bench there was a look of determination, such as a desperate man who had been backed into a corner might wear. He did not cast a single glance at Roger, and when, seated beside Stote, he heard the captain say that he seemed to have everything a pitcher could possibly use, he made no reply.

Mackeller, of Dartmouth, likewise had some slants and plenty of speed, but in his first turn on the mound, though no Yale man hit safely, he struck out but two of them.

Fierce as a tornado, Douglass returned to the slab and whiffed the next three batters. Such work was calculated to arouse enthusiasm and win applause, and he was generously cheered. Even this brought no smile to his lips and wrung from him no token that he had not suddenly become stone-deaf.

"He's a terror to-day," said Stote, walking in with Buck Rollins. "Pretty near lifts me off my pins every time I catch the ball."

"He's ugly," returned Rollins—"ugly as Satan. The sight of Boltwood warming up made him so."

"I don't care what the cause was. If he can keep up the clip he's set, we ought to take this game hands down."

In the second inning Yale pushed a man round to the registry station. Considering the way the game had opened, this one run looked like a great many.

Undaunted, Dartmouth did her best to come back strong. The first batter opened with a two-bagger, and the next man sacrificed the runner along with a bunt. This placed the visitors in a position to tie up the score on the squeeze play, a sacrifice bunt, or a long sacrifice fly.

Keenly alive to every movement of the enemy, Stote quickly decided that the squeeze should be tried, and communicated his belief through a signal to Douglass. Malcolm merely nodded and put the ball across the inside corner, keeping it high and giving it a hop. The hitter missed cleanly in his attempt to dump the sphere into the diamond, and Stote laughingly nailed the dismayed runner, who had come down from third under full headway. Then Malcolm struck out the man at the plate.

In response to the tremendous cheer that greeted this fine performance, he should have touched his cap, at least; but again he walked in

from the diamond like one at daggers drawn with all mankind.

"Some control, Doug," said Stote, beaming. "You put that last one shaving over the inside corner, and just on a hair level with the batter's shoulders. It had such a jump that I came near misjudging it, too."

Douglass did not reply. Finding a bat, he walked grimly to the plate and fouled seven times before Mackeller forced him into striking out.

Yale did not score in her half of the third inning. The fourth opened badly for the Blue. The first Dartmouth man hit a grounder at Carver, and the ball, taking a bad bound, hopped over Hippy's head. The next hitter bunted toward third, and Furbush, rushing, overran the ball. Both men were safe, and no one was out.

Stote more than half expected to see Douglass betray either annoyance or anger. To his surprise, the pitcher did neither, although, if possible, the cloud upon his face was a bit darker. Not even when the following batsman finally succeeded in laying down a bunt, which advanced the two runners while he was being thrown out, did Douglass show signs of being disturbed. The Dartmouth coaches were working hard for a run, and the visitors' sympathizers were cheering furiously.

Twice Malcolm kept the ball high and close on the next man who faced him, and twice the man stuck and missed. Then came a peach of a drop which fooled the batter even more conspicuously, and Yale had a chance to let loose its barking cheer.

"He's going to pull out of this hole, too," muttered Boltwood, watching from the bench.

His judgment was correct; twice the next man smote the air, and, though he hit the ball the next time he swung, he lifted a comfortable foul for Stote to smother. The inning passed, and neither team made a run; and it was the same with the inning that followed.

In the first of the sixth, however, with two down, a Dartmouth slugger pounded out a safe two-sacker. He was not contented, however, to let it go as a two-base hit, and surprised every one by racing on to third.

The ball had been thrown in to Inman, and Jack, warned by the yells of the coach, made haste to whip it across to Furbush. It was a weird throw, at least ten feet over the baseman's head, and the Dartmouth runner galloped to the pan and tied the score.

Like Walter Johnson on one of his "sunny days," Douglass whiffed the following batsman

with three pitched balls. He did not even look at Inman when Jack, hurrying to walk in with him, expressed heartfelt grief over his bad throw. The man was tongue-tied.

Encouraged by being placed on an even footing with the enemy, Mackeller went through the last of that inning in a style which would have interested even Connie Mack had he been present.

The seventh came on with each team determined to hold the other down, and ready to leap into the lead by taking advantage of any slight break that might occur. Douglass gave Dartmouth little chance. Striking out the first man, he worked the other two, forcing one to pop to the infield and causing the other to foul out back of first base.

Then Mackeller, returning to his job, got the two leading men who faced him. It was Brisbane who presently fathomed the Dartmouth twirler for a safety. Douglass followed Brisbane.

Mackeller got two strikes on him. Once more the Yale pitcher fouled time after time in the duel between himself and the opposing mound man. The struggle was watched with the tensest interest and anxiety by the great crowd.

At last it came. Malcolm gauged one of Mackeller's shoots to a nicety, and met the ball on the

seam. It was a screaming drive into deep right field.

Brisbane was off with the crack of wood meeting leather. Over second he raced, and on toward third, where the coacher furiously waved him home.

Douglass went down from first. He saw the ball recovered, saw the shortstop rush into position at the sack, ready to take the throw. He knew the ball was coming, and he slid, feet first. By a narrow margin he made it, the umpire squatting near and spreading out his hands in a sign that set the Yale crowd roaring.

But Douglass did not get up at once. Something had happened to him. He was writhing on the ground like a man in pain. He had sprained his ankle.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FROM A THOUSAND THROATS

IT was necessary to carry the injured man off the field. Borne by two of his teammates, his progress was that of a conqueror acclaimed and honored in the time of his misfortune. His face was twisted into a grimace, while in his ears dinned the cheering of the great gathering of undergraduates. It was too much even for his morose mood. He was hurt, and they knew he was out of the game. Under these conditions it was likely that Yale would lose; yet they were giving him an ovation. The shadow on his face lifted a little. Without realizing what he did, he lifted his hand above his head.

Such a cheer—such a cheer as he got! It would have stirred a heart of stone. It would have gladdened the soul of a Dewey returned from Manila Bay. His chin, which had been so set and viselike, quivered a little, but not with pain; his eyes, which had been cold and flinty, filled with mist. He winked it away, and, in doing so, found

himself looking at Boltwood, who looked at him as he was carried by.

"It's a thundering shame, Douglass," said Roger, "and I'm sorry. You had the game sewed up."

Malcolm's lips moved, but no sound passed them. Within him something strange stirred, leaped into life, and took possession of him—something he could not understand, something that filled him with an amazement not wholly free from dismay. It is in such moments that the human soul is transmuted like gold in a crucible.

Douglass was out of the game. Who could take his place? The question was asked by hundreds of lips. The accident had come so suddenly that no other pitcher was warmed up and ready. Pascal, Regan, Rackliffe—not one of them could step in there with an even chance of holding Dartmouth down.

The undergraduates craned their necks, watching the bench to see who it would be. They saw Roger Boltwood hurriedly pulling off his sweater. "It can't be Boltwood; his arm is bad."

"It's Boltwood! Stote's going to put Boltwood in!"

"It's Boltwood! It's Boltwood!" passed from lip to lip.

They saw Roger hurriedly run out to one side with the change catcher and a ball, and while Mackeller was disposing of the next Yale batter, he threw a few times to limber his arm. When the time came, he promptly walked out on the diamond.

Of course they greeted him right royally. Though doubt and apprehension bore heavily upon them, they gave him a big cheer.

For many days now his arm had seemed as well and strong as it ever had been, but Roger himself was not sure it would stand up under the test of real pitching in a game like this. Twice it had failed him; it might do so again. Throughout the seven innings he had pitched, Douglass had almost constantly used burning speed. Thinking of this, Roger wondered if a slower ball with a good curve would not bother the Dartmouth men for an inning or two, at least. It would require some time for them to readjust themselves to the change.

With this idea in his mind, he began his work deliberately, coolly, using his head as well as his arm. To his gratification, he soon found that his control was perfect, enabling him to put the ball just where he desired. Nor had he made a mistake in thinking that the shift would give the op-

posing hitters trouble. The first man struck out after fouling a few times; the second popped up an easy infield fly; the third, swinging too soon, hoisted a long foul close to the left-field line, and Riddle made a grand running catch of it. It was fine as a starter.

Stote beamed on Roger after snatching off his mask. "That was pretty easy," he cried, before the cheering began.

"It was easy enough that time," said Roger, jogging in; "but they may tumble to the snail stuff next inning. Unless we can get a bigger lead, we can't afford to let them have a single run."

But Yale could not increase her lead. Mackeller kept up the terrific pace, and permitted no player of the home team to reach first in the last of that inning.

Then came the test of the ninth. Justifying Roger's fears, the men from the Granite State had apparently become wise to the slower style of pitching; for the first one up refused to swing his head off, and, waiting, he succeeded in getting a safe hit. The batter who followed sacrificed him to second. This placed Dartmouth in a position to tie up the game on a two-bagger, possibly, on a long single. Furthermore, the batter who

followed was one of the most dangerous on the list.

"I've got to get this man," Boltwood told himself. "If he hits safely, the odds in our favor will be cut down."

Stote called for an outdrop, but Roger shook his head; and not until the Yale captain had given him the right signal did he make ready to pitch. Even then, he took time to drive the runner back to second, not wishing the man to get much of a lead.

When the ball left the Yale pitcher's fingers, it cut the air with speed equal to the fastest one Douglass had delivered that day. Moreover, Roger put a nice little jump on it, and the Dartmouth hitter, taken by surprise, missed by at least a foot. To his joy, Roger felt no snap, no warning twinge in his shoulder. "I'm all right!" he exulted. "The old wing is in form again. Now let's see if they can score."

He got his man with four pitched balls, and, seeing him in such perfect fettle, the watching crowd broke into a mighty roar.

Back of the plate, while waiting for the next batsman to come up, Stote took off his mask and stood, his hands on his hips, laughing at Roger. He was not the only one; the whole Yale team

seemed to be equally gleeful. The emotions of the father at the return of the Prodigal Son were mild compared with the rejoicing felt by them. As if by a miracle, Boltwood, the mainstay of the team, the man on whom they had pinned their faith to beat Harvard, was back again in perfect condition to rouse to life their most sanguine hopes. It was great.

Desperate, Dartmouth sent the next batter up with instructions to watch Boltwood's smoke, and get a hit by hook or by crook. To start with, Roger used a drop on him, and he fouled it. This was to the pitcher's advantage, but Boltwood did not try that same ball again. Just to show that he might still be thinking of working the slow one, the pitcher handed up a roundhouse. But it was so wide that the batsman could not have touched it with a club a foot longer than the one he was swinging. He let it pass for a ball. Taking his time, Boltwood presently used an inshoot that was not even fouled.

"Got him now, Boltwood!" cried Stote. "Trim his chin with another, and it will be all over."

Squatting, he gave the signal for Roger's most effective strike-out ball. It was the fadeaway, and the fruitless style in which the batter swung at it was indeed ludicrous. The umpire's thumb,

jerked over his shoulder, proclaimed Dartmouth's defeat.

The crowd poured down upon the field in a human cascade. Roger could not escape it. They caught him up, cheering madly.

"Now we're ready for Harvard!" was the cry.

CHAPTER XXIX

DOUBT RETURNS

AS Roger lay stretched upon the slab in the gymnasium, with two rubbers working over him, his teammates crowded around, fondly calling him a deceiver, a fraud, a scoundrel of the blackest dye. Some even threatened him with personal violence. All were happy as men could be who had been haunted by the fear of failure in the great ambition of their lives.

"How did it happen?" insisted Hippy Carver. "Tell us. The doctor said that—"

"He had a right to say it," interrupted Boltwood. "My old soup bone certainly was all to the bad."

"But what cured it? That's what we want to know."

Roger told them about the queer thing that had happened to him on the evening of his deepest hopelessness when, in a sudden burst of resentment, he had hurled a paper weight across his room.

"I don't know just what I did to my arm then,"

he confessed; "but there was a snap in my shoulder that took away my breath. It was precisely as if something had jerked back into place. From that night the lameness began to pass away. You call me a fraud. How was I to know that my shoulder would get entirely well? Even when I began to hope, I couldn't be sure, and it looked to me like bad policy to awaken hopes in others which might eventually be dashed."

"We'll forgive you, Bolt," said Hod Riddle; "but don't do it again. I can't stand the strain. I nearly passed away from heart failure when I saw you strike out Hendricks with your swift one."

When Roger was dressed and ready to leave the gymnasium, he found Dowling waiting for him. "Come on over to the Taft with me," said his roommate. "There's a mutual friend over there who wants to see you."

In the reception parlor of the hotel, Doris Keating was waiting. Uttering an exclamation of astonishment at sight of her, Boltwood sprang forward to clasp her hand. "Why, Doris!" he stammered. "You here? What brings you to New Haven?"

"Perhaps I came to see you and Andy," she answered teasingly. "Are you glad to see me?"

"Am I glad! Rather! But you didn't see the game?"

"No; I got in on a train only a short time ago. Met Andy by accident, and he told me all about how you had come back with your arm good as ever. Then I sent him to find you."

"Still, I don't understand how you happen to be here."

"I'll explain that," said Doris, her face growing serious. "A short time ago mother had a letter from Mrs. Herkimer. You remember, Roger, that they were girlhood friends. Mrs. Herkimer seemed to be very much disturbed. She stated that Kate Douglass had left her without any really satisfactory excuse for doing so, and added that she did not know where Kate had gone."

She hesitated a moment, and then went on swiftly: "Yesterday I was surprised to get a letter from Kate herself—we were the best of chums last summer. It was plain enough that Kate was in great trouble. She wrote almost incoherently." Again Doris hesitated. "She asked me to do her a—a favor. Never mind what that favor was, Roger. It led me to decide to come here at once. And here I am."

"But Miss Douglass—she left New Haven sev-

eral days ago," said Boltwood. "She was here, but she's gone."

"She was here yesterday, as the postmark of her letter proved," returned Doris. "She's staying with the Deerings."

Boltwood caught his breath. There was a tumult in his brain. Douglass had lied about his sister leaving New Haven; that being the case, had he not likewise lied about the pawned earring? He actually had bluffed Boltwood into believing that the jewel was what he claimed it to be, the property of his sister. Now, once again, Roger was obsessed by the conviction that the fellow was a thief. He could no longer take half-way measures.

"I'm going to take a carriage to the Deerings' right away," said Doris; "but I did want to see you a moment before doing so. You don't look well, Roger; you're frightfully pale. I hope pitching in that game didn't—"

"I'm all right, Doris," he assured her in a low tone. "What you've just told suddenly convinced me that I've been fooled by Malcolm Douglass, and I'll admit that it got my goat. Shall we see you later?"

"Oh, surely," she replied. "I'll return here, and you may look for me. To-morrow is Tap

Day, and now that I'm in New Haven I mean to wait over."

They escorted her to the carriage and saw her off. When she was gone, Dowling turned to his companion, who stood at the curbing, a deep cloud on his face. "You haven't taken me into your confidence in this Douglass affair, Bolt," said Andy, "and I'm not going to pry now. I'm satisfied, nevertheless, that I had the man sized up to a T; blood will tell. As for his sister, I'm sorry you should—"

"Come on," interrupted Boltwood sharply, "let's move."

Near Osborne Hall they met Fred Morrison, who came hurrying toward them. "I say, Bolt," called Morrison, "Douglass wants to see you right away. He sent me out for you."

"Where is he?"

"In his room. There's no one with him, and he told me to ask you to come alone."

"All right."

At Roger's first step, Dowling grasped his shoulder.

"I think it would be just as well if I went with you. If you're going to have another mix-up with Douglass—"

"Have you forgotten that he sprained his ankle?"

He was lugged off the field, unable to put his foot to the ground. Under such circumstances I hardly think he will be in a fighting mood. He doesn't want me for that—"

"Have your own way," said Dowling.

He accompanied Roger to the Oval, where they parted as Boltwood proceeded to the room of Malcolm Douglass.

This time Roger knocked. Immediately a low voice invited him to come in. Douglass was sitting on a chair with his swathed and bandaged ankle resting on a cushion in another chair. There was a strange expression on his face; a strange, unfathomable light in his dark eyes.

"Close the door, Boltwood," he requested. "Perhaps you'd better lock it, too, for I don't want any one to interrupt us. Bring up a chair and sit down near me. I'm going to tell you the truth."

CHAPTER XXX

FOR HIS SOUL'S RELIEF

I NEVER thought i would come to this," said Malcolm, in a voice a trifle hoarse, as Roger sat down facing him a few feet away. "If any one had told me so yesterday, or even to-day, before I was hurt in that game, I'd have ridiculed him. I don't know what's happened to me. I don't know why I've changed. What in the name of wonders has come over me, I'd like to know?"

Roger made no attempt to reply. Silent and grim, he waited for Douglass to continue. "I say I can't understand it," the man resumed; "but, still, I believe, in a way, I do. We're both juniors, both Yale men, and in some small degree that fact makes an invisible bond between us that I never before have recognized. I've heard men talk of the Yale spirit, and I fancied I understood their words. Now I know I didn't. To-day I felt for the first time that spirit taking possession of my body and soul. I felt it creeping over me while I was pitching in that game, growing and growing, until it lifted and exalted me as I never before

have been exalted. I fought against it—yes, I fought against it. It was too strong; it mastered me.

“I went into the game with resentment filling my heart. I don’t think I can make you understand how I felt, but at first all the cheering of that great crowd had no effect save to increase that resentment. I was showing them that I could pitch. I had been moved by that one intense, selfish desire—the desire to prove that they were fools, and that I was as good a man as you—even better. Then this strange feeling, this conquering spirit I speak of, took hold of me, and I began to realize what I was and what I was doing. I had no right to be there pitching for my own selfish glory; even to think of such a thing lowered me. I was pitching for Old Eli! I was one among thousands who should be ready to sacrifice self and ambition and personal glory for the good of Yale. And so, though I struggled to betray no sign of it, and to maintain my attitude of resentment, I was lifted up until I pitched as I’ve never pitched before in all my life.

“When I sprained my ankle,” he went on, after a brief pause, “when they carried me off the field, and I heard all Yale cheering for me, I became a real Yale man! But there was a last straw to

break the camel's back: they carried me past the spot where you were standing. I saw you looking at me, and I heard you tell me that you were sorry. Had you done such a thing yesterday I wouldn't have believed it; I'd have thought you a hypocrite. At that moment I knew that you, too, were a Yale man in all the words signify. You were a man who could put aside prejudice, self, and any personal feeling—for Old Eli.

"Wait!" he cried quickly, as Roger seemed about to speak. "Don't say a word until you've heard all I have to tell you. All this leads me now to reveal myself to you for just what I am, when no physical torture short of those of the Inquisition could have forced the words from me. I've lied to you, Boltwood. I'm not a thief by intent: circumstances forced me to do something I now know I shall always regret. Those circumstances were brought about by my own folly.

"I had to have money. I had none. I found Mrs. Herkimer's earring in the limousine, and put it into my pocket. At that moment I had no intention of doing anything wrong. I meant to restore the earring, but in the excitement that night I forgot it. Afterward, here in my room, I found it in my pocket. I knew it was worth a great deal, and I was tempted. I was not tempted

to steal it, to keep it permanently. To me it seemed luck-sent, a thing by which I could raise money to tide me over in my necessity. I decided to pawn it, settle my pressing debts. Later, I could redeem it and restore it to its rightful owner. I sought to make myself believe that this was scarcely dishonest, certainly not theft. Nevertheless, for a time I hesitated, during which time my creditors pressed me harder.

“Something I inadvertently said made my sister suspicious. She believed that I had the earring, though I denied it. And so, one day when I was out, she came here, found the door unlocked, found no one in, and began to search. I returned and found her. We had words. I forbade her ever coming to this room again.”

This brought instantly to Boltwood's mind the occasion on which, standing just outside the door, he had heard Malcolm snarling at his sister.

“That night,” Douglass pursued hurriedly, as if anxious to get the humiliating confession over, “I pawned the earring. After dickering with the old Shylock, I managed to get two hundred dollars on it—enough to save me for the time being. But my sister had followed me. She had started out with the idea of sending for me to have another talk, when she saw me hurrying to the

pawnbroker's. She remained outside that shop until I came out, but even then I denied to her that I had pawned the earring. She didn't believe me.

"It was the idea that I had been guilty of this that led Kate to leave Mrs. Herkimer. Her conscience was so concerned at the thought that I, her brother, had done it, that she could not meet the eyes of her benefactress. Fearing that her manner would betray her, she made an excuse to get away.

"That's the whole story, Boltwood, and it's wretched enough. Now you know just what I am, though I hope with all my soul you'll believe I spoke the truth in saying that I meant—and still mean—to restore Mrs. Herkimer's earring as soon as I could find a way to do so."

Roger seemed to be thinking hard, his eyes fastened on the rug at his feet. Twice Malcolm opened his lips to say something more, but each time he closed them and waited. Presently Roger looked up slowly.

"There was Baxby," he said. "You were more or less friendly with him. Why didn't you get him to loan you money?"

"I did—some. But even Baxby said that he was rather short—that he had been forced of late to dig down into his pocket for some reason he

didn't explain to me. I could give him no security, and I think he felt that any loan he might make me would be lost. At any rate, I could get no more out of him."

Roger rose to his feet. "Douglass," he said, "give me that pawn ticket."

"What do you want of it? I've written my brother in the West, telling him everything and asking him to send me money right away. I don't know that he will have it, but he'll send it if he has."

"Give me that pawn ticket."

Malcolm put his hand in his pocket and brought out his billfold. From this he extracted the pawn ticket, which, without further objection, he passed over to Boltwood.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE LAST TANGLED THREAD

ON the campus, Boltwood discovered Norry Bernfield, who greeted him with an eager, enthusiastic handshake. "Good old Bolt!" cried Norry. "Back again in armor and ready to do the Siegfried stunt to the Harvard monster!"

"Norry," said Roger, "I want to borrow some money. I've a little of my own, but I need more. You sometimes have plenty of it on hand. I hope you have now."

"How much do you want?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"A mere bag of shells!" Bernfield laughed. "Why, yes, I think I can spare it, old man. Cashed a check yesterday."

Roger got the two hundred, and with it he set out at once for the pawnshop.

It was not pure altruism that dominated him. His purpose to redeem the earring and see that it was restored to Mrs. Herkimer could not be called wholly unselfish. Though he believed Douglass

sincere in his professed change of heart, it was not of Malcolm's plight that he was thinking as he hurried toward the pawnshop. He was thinking of a girl with dark hair and eyes of the deepest violet, who had been made to suffer most keenly through the dishonorable action of her brother. To know that she had suffered thus caused Roger Boltwood suffering, and therefore it was for his own relief, as well as for the good of others, that he hurried to secure possession of the fateful earring.

He was returning, the jewel safe in his possession, when a messenger found him and gave him a number to call without delay on the phone. At a glance he recognized the call as that of the Deering residence, and lost no time in responding.

A few minutes later he was talking with Doris over the wire. She urged him to come out to the Deerings' at once, saying that she must see him without delay on an affair of the utmost importance.

Roger had had no dinner, and it was late, but he secured a jitney, and was driven posthaste to the home of Robert Deering. He found Doris waiting alone for him in the reception room.

"It was good of you to come so quickly, Roger,"

she said, hurrying to meet him, and placing her hand on his arm while she looked earnestly into his face. "Miss Douglass has been quite ill, and she's still dreadfully upset, although I believe she's feeling much better now. I couldn't tell you what I wanted, over the wire. Roger, I want to borrow some money. I want you to loan me two hundred dollars. I need that and a little more, but I have some of my own, and two hundred will be enough. I must have it to-night."

He hesitated a moment, then put his hand into his pocket, and brought out the earring carefully wrapped in tissue paper. "Perhaps you'd rather have this," he said, placing it in her hand.

Wondering, she removed the rubber bands and unfolded the tissue paper until she saw the earring gleaming before her eyes. Only by catching herself quickly did she refrain from giving utterance to a loud cry of astonishment and delight. "Why—why—it's the lost earring—Mrs. Herkimer's earring! I wanted the money to give—some one—to take it out of pawn. I don't understand, Roger; how did it come to be in your possession?"

"I took it out of pawn myself not fifteen minutes before I received word that you wanted me on the wire."

"But how—how could you?"

He explained to her, telling all about Malcolm Douglass's confession. She listened, the color coming and going in her cheeks. When he had finished she spoke in a low tone: "I'm very glad Malcolm has realized at last just what he was doing. He thought his sister didn't know for sure, but she did. She heard him say that he had raised two hundred dollars, and there was no other way for him to get that amount of money. With the two hundred I was to get for her, she had planned to compel her brother to redeem the earring, and give it to her, so that she might restore it to Mrs. Herkimer. Wait, Roger, until I take it to her. I want to say something more before you go, but it isn't right to keep her another moment in suspense."

He did not have to wait long. In a few minutes, quick steps and a slight rustle of skirts were followed by the appearance of both girls. Kate Douglass came first, and when she saw Boltwood standing with his lips slightly parted, his eyes turned in her direction, his fine face full of earnest feeling, a flood of color leaped into her cheeks and she held out her hands to him. With a single stride, almost, he reached her and grasped those trembling, extended hands. The look that he gave her spoke volumes.

And, standing in the doorway witnessing all this, fully interpreting the expression on his face and the light in his eyes, was Doris Keating.

"Mr. Boltwood," said Kate Douglass in a voice vibrant with deepest emotion, "you can't realize what you have done for me! I'm glad—oh, so glad!—that it was you in whom my brother chose to confide. He was tempted, Mr. Boltwood, but he didn't really mean to steal. I believe it has taught him a lesson. Now if his mistake can be hidden—"

"You may stake your life on it that no one but those who already know the truth will ever hear a whisper of it from me," said Roger, still holding her hands.

"But the money—the money you were obliged to pay out in order to redeem the earring—I promise you shall get it back, every dollar, every cent."

"Don't let that disturb you, Miss Douglass; don't worry about it for a single minute, I beg you. If you only knew how glad I was to do this for you. I did it for *you*."

Again the color mounted into her cheeks, her eyelids drooped, and almost in fear, it seemed, she quickly drew away. Doris Keating, stepping forward, put an arm around the other girl.

"I'm going to stay all night with Kate, Roger," she said; "but I must go back to the Taft for my traveling bag. You came in a motor, didn't you? Would you mind taking me back with you?"

Then he knew he had betrayed himself, and of a sudden he was wretched indeed. His voice husky, his forced smile almost pitiful to see, he answered mechanically: "It will be a great pleasure, Doris."

In his heart he felt certain it would be anything but that.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE THIRTEENTH MAN

HIS face glowing, Boltwood came bursting into the study where Dowling sat meditatively smoking his after-dinner pipe. Andy looked up in astonished reproof, and gave his roommate a hard stare.

"Well, what's the matter with you?" he almost growled. "You weren't at dinner. Where have you been?"

"Been taking a little bubble ride with Miss Doris Keating," said Roger, laughing.

Andy flushed, and a shadow quickly overspread his face. "A bubble ride with Doris?" he muttered. "Why, I thought she went out to the Deerings'. I thought—"

"So she did," interrupted Roger, planting himself on the rug in front of Dowling, his manner tantalizing. "I've been out there myself and made a little call."

"Well, I must say that you've been doing some things in a hurry!"

"And that's quite true also," asserted Roger

cheerfully, "though you don't understand the full significance of it, old sport. Sorry I can't let you in on everything, but I'll tell you all that it's necessary for you to know. I saw Miss Douglass at the Deerings'. I think I was rather pleased to see her again, a fact which I must have betrayed to Doris, who happened to be looking on."

"Oh, you chump!" said Dowling, rising and glowering into Roger's face. "You don't deserve to have such a girl like Doris Keating care so much for you! And now you've let her get wise to the fact that you're a fickle, faithless—"

"She was wise all right," admitted Boltwood. "I knew she was, and I dreaded it when she suggested riding back in the jitney with me to the Taft. I expected a very disagreeable ride. It was extremely pleasant."

"How could it be? You don't mean to say that she—"

"She congratulated me on my good taste in liking Miss Kate Douglass. Now wait. You're wrong, Andy; she didn't do it the way you think. She was sincere. She wasn't hurt or sore the least bit; I've got sense enough to know that."

"But man alive, you're blind! She thinks so much of you that—"

"Man alive, *you're* blind," retorted Roger,

placing both his hands on Andy's shoulders. "You're the one she cares for—in the way you mean. I thought so long ago, and it made me fancy I was jealous; but henceforth there's no danger of that. I'm the chump who butted in between you two. Wake up, old man; come to life and get busy. Doris stays over to-morrow, and you'll have a chance to see her."

"Good gracious!" said Andy, sitting down again on the chair as if his legs suddenly had given away.

The sun scattered the mists of Tap Day morning, but it could not dispel the clouds of suspense which filled the hearts of many anxious juniors. Dowling himself showed it, and he betrayed his fretfulness by snapping at Roger because the latter seemed so calm and unmoved. "You may think you're sure of being tapped, Bolt," he said, "but I have my doubts about myself. I don't believe—"

"You get me wrong, old man," returned Roger, with a placid smile. "I've arrived at the conclusion that I haven't a ghost of a show."

"And, thinking that, you accept it without a murmur, without a kick? Well, I'm not built that way."

"I've had my inward fight and I'm done with it, that's all."

He really believed his words, and he continued to believe them until the fateful hour of five in the afternoon drew near. Again and again he put aside a haunting little ghost of a hope which kept stealing upon him and seeking to whisper in his ear. Handy Jones came around and made this struggle harder.

"I know you're going to be one of the elect, Bolt!" Jones declared. "Why, they simply can't pass you over. Such a thing would be to the eternal shame of the college."

"Get out of here, false prophet!" cried Roger, flinging a book at Handy, who deftly caught it. "They'd much better pick you."

"Me!" squealed Jones. "Why, if there were only forty-six men in the class I'd be the forty-sixth."

It was half past four when Dowling and Boltwood left the Oval and went over to the campus, to find the Junior Fence already swarming with their classmates. Both men were greeted lustily by friends as they appeared and sought a place in that agitated mass of youths. Barely had they taken their positions when Jones came crowding through, and again disturbed Roger by stirring

up that feeble hope. "If I were rich and a betting man," said Handy, "I'd risk a fortune on it—you'll be tapped. I'm going to hang right here and be ready to give you a cheer."

At last the fateful hour came, and promptly on the minute certain well-known men of the senior societies were seen hurrying hither and thither through the swaying, breathless throng. Men stood on tiptoes to gaze over the heads of others, anxious to see the first man tapped. A great shout went up. "Who is it?" cried some one near Roger.

"It's Kellog—Kellog, first man for Bones!"

The mass of humanity parted, cheering, as Kellog, eager-eyed, hurried through a human lane, followed closely by the man who had tapped him. Another shout went up. Some one had been chosen for Scroll and Keys. A moment later there was a cheering for one who had been tapped for Wolf's Head.

This continued rapidly, the mass of expectant juniors keeping a record of the number of men chosen by each society. As the margin dwindled, those who had entertained hopes, and still lingered untapped, grew more and more anxious and agitated. Bones had taken nine men. Suddenly, as Dowling was enumerating them to Roger, Wade

Storrow appeared at his elbow, gave him a terrific thump on the back and cried: "Go to your room!"

Dowling was chosen for Bones!

Roger seized his hand and wrung it. "Good boy!" he cried. "I'm glad, Andy—mighty glad!"

Choking, unable to reply, Dowling hurried away, cheered loudly; and Storrow followed at his heels.

"They'll get you yet," said a voice at Boltwood's elbow. "They can't miss you."

"Are you still here, Jones?" returned Roger.

"What did you think? No danger I'd be dragged away. Told you I'd stay to see you get yours."

Another man was selected for Bones, the eleventh. Suddenly, a few minutes later, Jones clutched Roger's arm, muttering excitedly: "Here comes Hapgood of Bones—coming right this way! He's after you. You're it, Bolt—you're it this time, sure!"

Elmer Hapgood came straight at them, and, for a second, Roger's heart leaped into his throat. Could it be possible, after all, that he—

Hapgood tapped Jones!

Handy nearly collapsed in his tracks. He couldn't believe it. He even started to stammer some words, but caught himself, his face white as

a sheet, his legs almost doubling beneath him as he stumbled away.

"The finest thing yet!" cried Roger, recovering from the effort of the cheer in which he had joined. "Old Handy chosen for Bones! It's simply magnificent."

Only three more could go to that society. Roger felt that he had been right in thrusting hope sternly aside. Here and there he saw little tumults in the crowd, and heard sudden bursts of shouts and cheering as other men were chosen for Wolf's Head or Keys. Watching thus, he failed to perceive a rather stout, serious senior who came pushing through the crowd that drew back to make room for him. It was Price Kilmer, and when he had reached Roger, he promptly gave him a slap on the back, and the order to go to his room. His lips parted, Boltwood cast one look into Kilmer's face and knew that he, too, had been chosen to enter the fold which had gathered Dowling and Jones to its embrace.

"Boltwood!" was the cry. "Thirteenth man for Bones—Boltwood!"

"The thirteenth," thought Roger, as he started. "Who ever said thirteen was an unlucky number!"

THE END.

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